

THROUGH ARMENIA  
ON  
HORSEBACK  
BY  
GEORGE H. HEPWORTH

Library of the Theological Seminary,

11. 8. '98.

PRINCETON, N. J.

Purchased by the Hammill Missionary Fund.

Division... DS165

Section... H52

Number.....



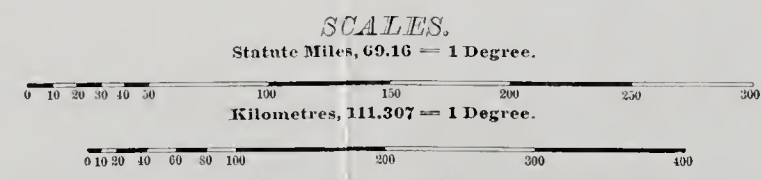




Longitude East from Greenwich.

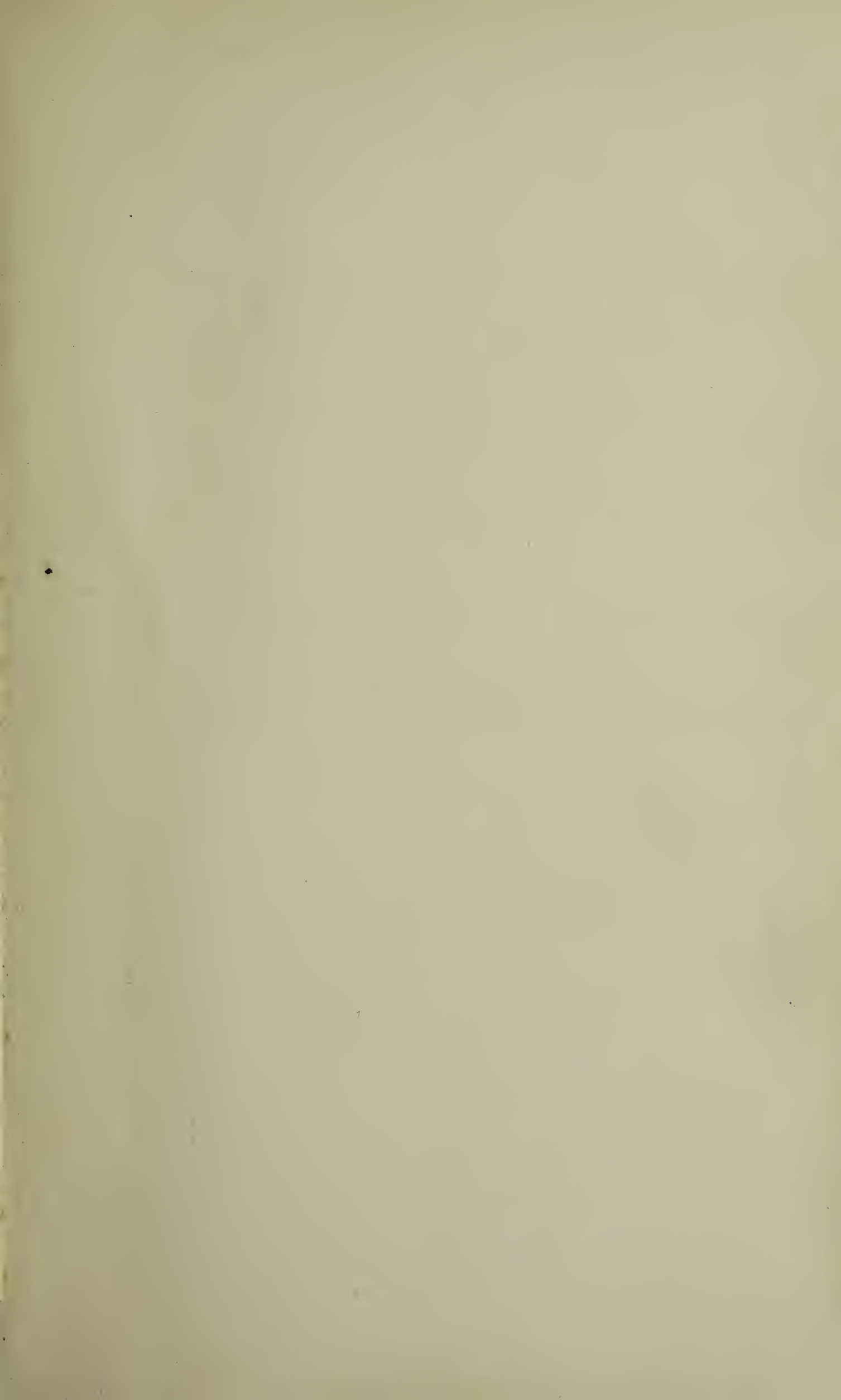
# TURKEY IN ASIA, Map of Mr. Hepworth's Route

E. P. DUTTON & CO., NEW YORK.



Longitude East from Greenwich.





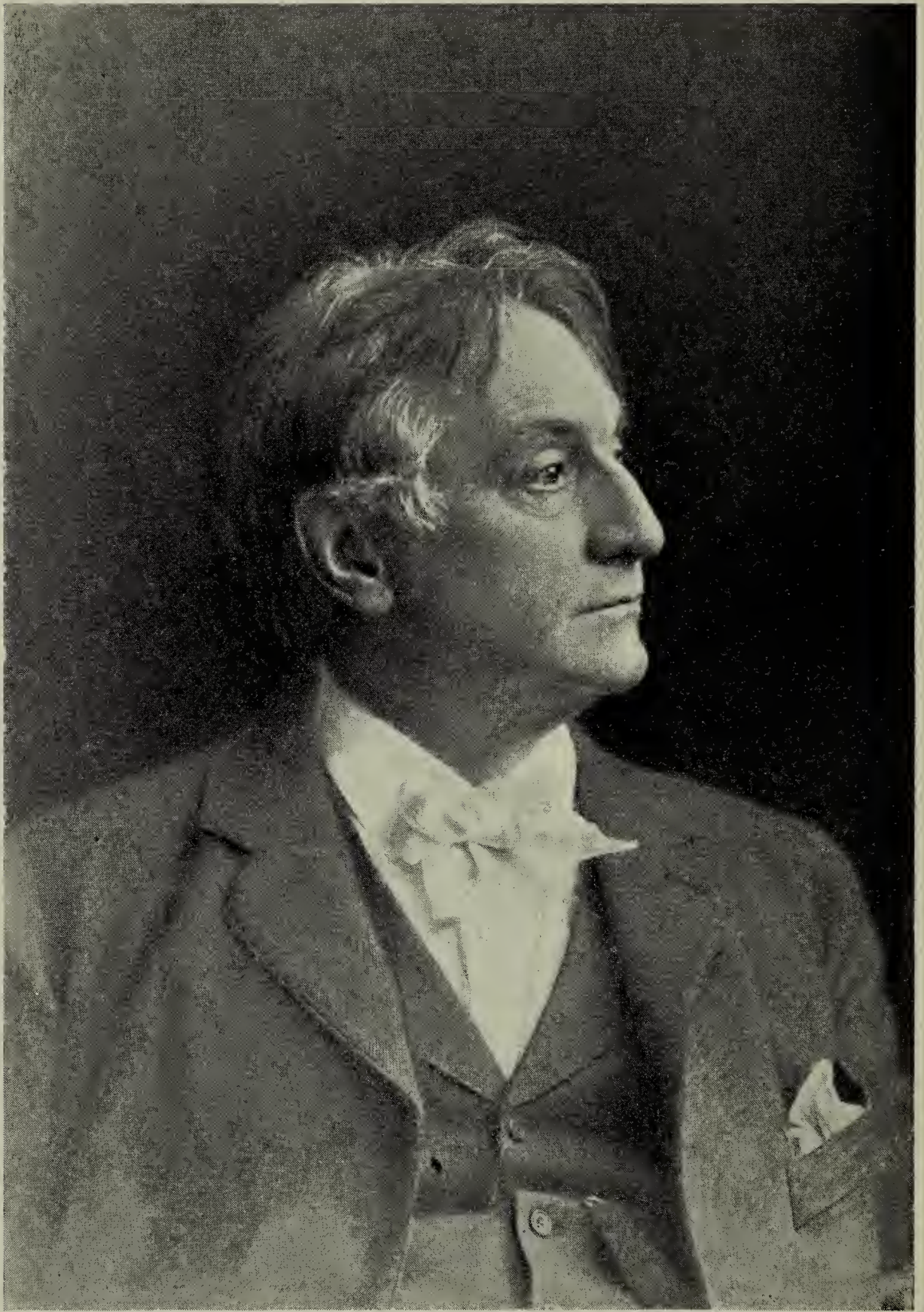












Geo. Thompson



# THROUGH ARMENIA ON HORSEBACK

BY  
✓  
GEO. H. HEPWORTH



NEW YORK  
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY  
31 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET  
1898

COPYRIGHT, 1898  
BY  
E. P. DUTTON & CO.

The Knickerbocker Press, New York



To

JAMES GORDON BENNETT, Esq.

WHO OFFERED ME A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT THE  
TURKS, THE KURDS, AND THE ARMENIANS  
OF EASTERN ANATOLIA

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

CONTAINING THE RESULTS OF MY JOURNEY





## PREFACE.

IT was after a hard day's travel—we had been in the saddle twelve long hours and had stopped for the night at a little village on the banks of the Tigris. It was cold beyond the reach of language to express. Mr. Sidney Whitman, Dr. Wallish and I had just finished our evening meal, prepared by Migurditch, our Armenian cook and had sought the welcome solace of cigars. The room which had been allotted to us had two defects. First, it could not be heated though the pile of cow-dung was blazing in the fireplace. Second, there were holes in the wall, but no windows; glass is too expensive a luxury for that part of the world. The frozen air chilled us to the bones and we begged our host, a kind old Turk, who looked as I imagine Abraham must have looked when he had reached his three-score and tenth anniversary, to fill all these holes in the wall with hay.

None of us was sleepy, however. Our camp beds were in readiness, but there was no disposition to occupy them. Perhaps we were

too tired to sleep. It is possible to be so. So we sat with our fur overcoats on, talking about the experiences of the day, the precipice just behind us, the long caravans of camels we had met, and a group of rough-looking fellows who had passed us in the middle of the afternoon, brigands to a certainty, but sullenly quiet as we had twenty cavalymen with us, who would not have been sorry if they had seen a good chance for a brush.

Dr. Wallish is a scholar, thoroughly abreast of the times; Mr. Whitman knew Moltke, is honored with the friendship of Bismarck, and has a thousand anecdotes on his tongue's tip, while as for myself—I am an American, have seen something of the Civil War, and so had a good deal to say about our national institutions, our industries, and the spirit of the people.

The fire burned dimly. The oil in the lamp was nearly spent. It was just such a lamp as Roman boys used to light themselves to bed with, a vessel filled with oil and a wick floating about in it supported by a cork.

“How many books have been written on Armenia and the Armenians?” asked the doctor.

“More than you can count,” replied Mr. Whitman. “They are mostly one-sided, however, and untrustworthy. One man is in love



with the Turks and his book is a eulogy. Another one pities the Armenians and his book is a libel on the Turkish government."

"True," added the doctor. "It is worse than folly to visit this country with preconceived notions. Turkey is like the Bible—you can find anything in it you may happen to want. If you come here with a theory you will find plenty of facts to back the theory no matter what the theory may be. There are not many books on Turkey in which you cannot find a bias. Hence the strangely contradictory statements that are met with."

Whitman turned to me and remarked: "And you, do you propose to write a book also?"

"That is my purpose," I answered, "and I have notes enough already to fill a large volume."

"Well," said Dr. Wallish, "if you can be impartial——"

I had been getting under the blankets and said in sleepy tones, "I shall try to be. Good-night, gentlemen."

And here is the book. I know that I have looked at both sides of the Armenian question, but whether I have seen both sides or not, I must leave you to determine.

G. H. H.





# CONTENTS

---

CHAPTER	PAGE
I.—PURPOSE OF THE EXPEDITION . . . . .	I
II.—THE GOLDEN HORN . . . . .	19
III.—TO TREBIZOND . . . . .	39
IV.—ZIGANA PASS . . . . .	64
V.—OVER KOP DAGH . . . . .	86
VI.—ERZEROOM . . . . .	106
VII.—THE MASSACRES . . . . .	128
VIII.—ANOTHER VIEW OF THE MASSACRES . . . . .	148
IX.—QUEER PEOPLE . . . . .	174
X.—ARARAT . . . . .	199
XI.—HAMIDIEHS AND MASSACRES . . . . .	222
XII.—THE WEAKNESS OF TURKEY . . . . .	244
XIII.—WESTWARD BOUND . . . . .	265
XIV.—THE MISSIONARIES . . . . .	291
XV.—TURKISH SCHOOLHOUSES . . . . .	310
XVI.—AN ARMENIAN'S VIEW . . . . .	321
XVII.—A SUMMARY . . . . .	334





## ILLUSTRATIONS

---

	PAGE
MAP OF MR. HEPWORTH'S ROUTE	<i>Inside front cover</i>
GEORGE H. HEPWORTH . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
KURDISH OX-CART . . . . .	<i>Title-page</i>
SIDNEY WHITMAN . . . . .	3
OUR TURKISH ESCORT . . . . .	4
A TURKISH BEGGAR . . . . .	16
AN OUT-OF-DOOR COFFEE STAND . . . . .	26
A TYPICAL CROWD . . . . .	38
TREBIZOND . . . . .	52
A GROUP OF LAZIS . . . . .	66
A RESTAURANT . . . . .	84
ERZERROOM . . . . .	106
MISSIONARY'S HOUSE IN ERZERROOM . . . . .	122
DEALERS IN ROSARIES . . . . .	126
AN EATING-HOUSE . . . . .	136
A DERVISH . . . . .	150
A KURDISH CHIEF . . . . .	161
SHOEMAKERS . . . . .	174
A KURDISH NOBLEMAN. . . . .	192
A KURDISH MERCHANT . . . . .	214

	PAGE
SEKKI PACHA AND HIS STAFF . . . . .	230
BEGGARS . . . . .	246
ARMENIAN GIRLS . . . . .	266
DIARBEKIR . . . . .	278
AINTAB . . . . .	285
A DERVISH . . . . .	300
BARBERS . . . . .	324



# THROUGH ARMENIA ON HORSEBACK

---

## CHAPTER I.

### THE PURPOSE OF THE EXPEDITION.

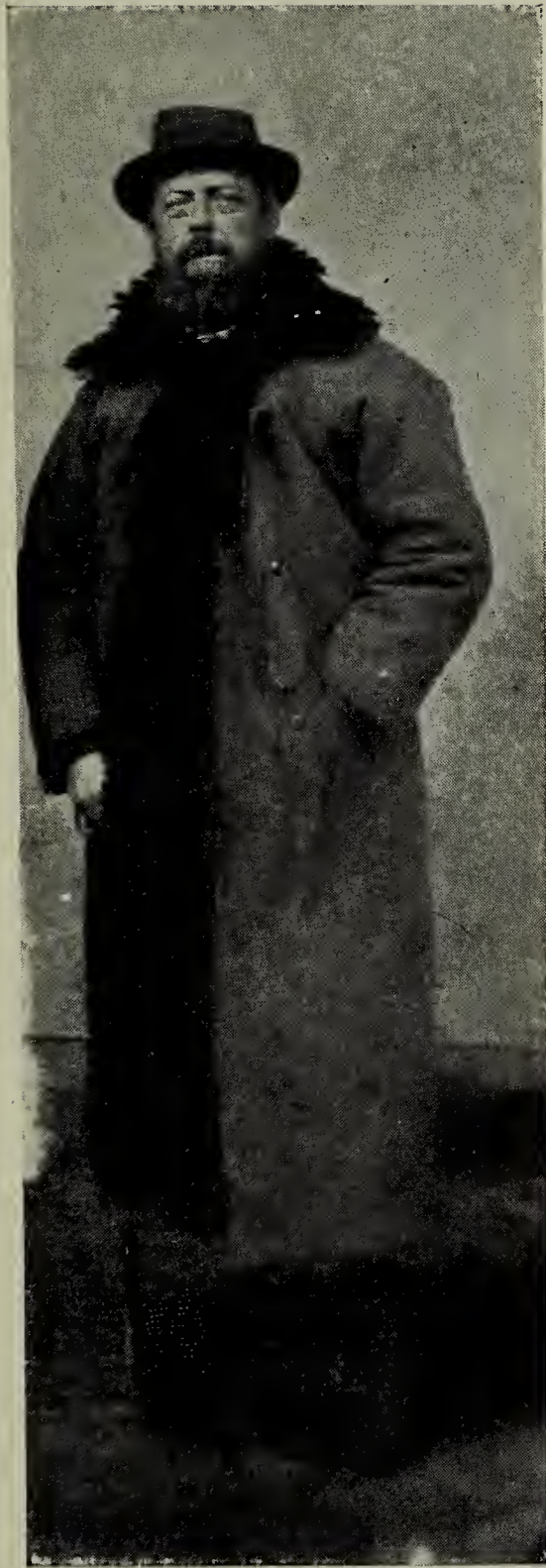
WHEN Mr. Bennett asked by cable if I would like to go to Anatolia, I was as much surprised as I should have been by an order to pack my gripsack and take the first aërial express to Mars to find out what those signals mean which the inhabitants of that planet are supposed to be making to the Earth. Would I like to go? An old fellow like me, who had reached a point somewhat beyond the sixtieth degree of life's latitude, trust myself to the tender mercies of Lazi and Kurdish brigands, or run the risk of being quietly buried under the snow of some wild mountain pass? These possibilities were not exactly attractive.

## 2 Through Armenia on Horseback

It was to be my duty to take a bird's-eye view of the Armenian region, where so many horrible massacres have taken place, and to discover, so far as possible, the present condition and future prospects of this nearly exterminated race. It occurred to me that such an expedition might be merely a dream of the night which would be forgotten in the morning, a mere flash of journalistic genius, and so I begged for mercy. When I afterwards learned that the matter was seriously regarded by him, that, since the rumors from Armenia during the last few years have been not only vague but contradictory, the purpose was to get at the truth and the whole truth, I saw that the opportunity was a providential one and ought not to be rejected. I wrote to him accordingly, and with his usual promptitude he answered, "Take the next steamer and meet me in Paris." So I packed my trunk, said good-bye to my friends with a heavy and sinking heart, and was soon on the deck of the *Champagne* bound for Havre.

It seems that Mr. Bennett had entertained this plan for a long time. In a protracted interview with the Sultan at Constantinople the subject had been discussed, and it became clear to Mr. Bennett that His Majesty, whether





SIDNEY WHITMAN.



rightly or wrongly, was under a strong conviction that the reports from the Armenian district contained more fiction than fact. If you say that this declaration on his part was probably a matter of diplomatic *finesse*, that he must have been perfectly acquainted with the condition of affairs, but wished to conceal it, then I must aver that it was a great mistake to consent to my taking part in the enterprise. He was told frankly that I was a clergyman, and that my sympathies were with the Armenians. When, however, he was assured that I could be impartial, that I had rather a keen appetite for facts whether they backed my prejudices or opposed them, he withdrew all opposition and assured Mr. Bennett that in such case he was not only eager to have me go, but would give orders that I should have every opportunity for as thorough an investigation as the time to be spent on the journey would permit.

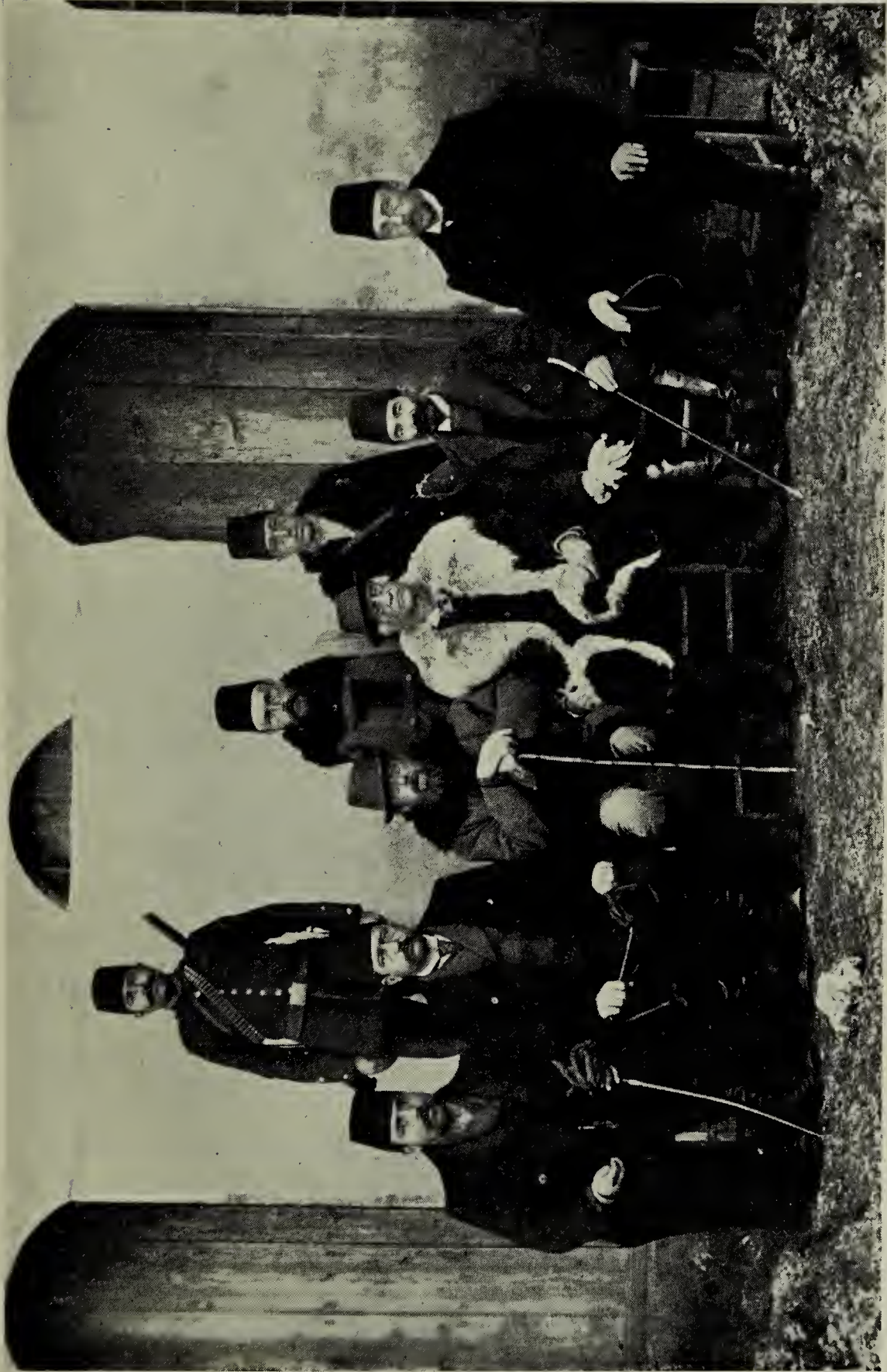
He made only one condition, namely, that I was to be accompanied by Mr. Sidney Whitman, with whom he had personal relations, and in whom he had great confidence. In token of his earnestness he offered to send three or four of his *aides de camp* as a kind of body-guard and half-a-dozen sergeants for purposes



## 4 Through Armenia on Horseback

of protection in case of danger from the brigands who infest that region. Our little company, therefore, consisted of Sirry Bey, Colonel Tewfik Bey, Lieut. Colonel Rushdi Bey, Khaled Bey, secretary of the expedition, Mr. Whitman, and myself.

When I have mentioned the names of these gentlemen, I see the criticism that at once arises in your mind. You say, and nobody can blame you for saying, that I was hedged about by Turks and a Turkophile, and that it would be impossible to get at the truth. Under like circumstances, I should make the same comment; and if at this stage you shrug your shoulders or even ridicule the expedition, my only answer is that at the first blush you are quite right. I felt the weight of that possibility, and for awhile was somewhat oppressed by it. A thousand times I asked myself as I looked out of my window in the Pera Palace Hotel if I was shrewd enough to detect any attempt to influence me, and, when detected, if I was strong-willed enough to resist it. In a word, I looked on the matter just as you do, and was more than half inclined to retreat. I recalled Mr. Bennett's parting injunction, to lift my hat and politely say "Good-morning" if I saw that any pressure was being brought to bear



OUR TURKISH ESCORT.





to interfere with entire freedom of action and investigation, and wondered if it might not be well to take that step, and so have done with the whole affair.

Then two facts occurred to me—you see I am in the confessional and laying my heart bare to you. First, this was the only way in which it would be possible to go from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean and so through Armenia from north to south. The Sultan has never allowed any representative of the press to take such a journey. This may be a mistake on his part, and I am inclined to think it is, because the refusal distinctly implies that there is something hidden which must not be disclosed; but still that has always been his policy. Many travellers have gone along parts of the route which we were to take, but so far as I know, not one has made the whole journey. Here was an invitation to travel where we chose, as long and as far as we chose, and could I afford to neglect it?

In order to put the declaration of freedom to a test, I took the best map of Asia Minor that could be found, and marked with red ink all the salient points which I thought it necessary to visit, that is to say, the points at which the massacres had occurred. I wanted to get

## 6 Through Armenia on Horseback

as far into the interior as possible, and as close to the Russian and Persian frontiers as I could, and so drew a line from Trebizond to Erzerum, thence to Van, thence along the lake shore to Bitlis, thence to Diarbekir, and thence to Alexandretta, by way of Aintab. This would give me a chance to pass through the Sassoon district, to see the Kurds, now being organized into Hamidieh regiments,—called Hamidieh in honor of His Majesty Abdul Hamid—and to get a glimpse of the stalwart Circassians. Mr. Whitman assisted me in laying out this route, and we both agreed that it would furnish us with more facts and opportunities for observation than any other. That map was submitted to the Sultan, and I awaited the result with some anxiety. If my plan were accepted, it would prove that the Sultan really meant that the investigation should be without let or hindrance on his part. If it were rejected, and another suggested, it would show that I was to work under cover of surveillance, in which case it would be mere folly to engage in the enterprise. You may judge of my surprise and delight therefore, when I received word from Yildiz that the Sultan was pleased with the route we had chosen, and that we might take our departure as soon as the proper prep-

arations could be made. My mind was at once set at ease, and I felt sure that I could enter upon my work without any hampering limitations.

The second fact which gave me hope was equally important in its bearings. It has been my conviction that no good can result from dwelling in detail on the horrors which have taken place. They make a lurid picture, and one which, as I afterwards discovered, even the Turks speak of in whispers as though they appreciated the infamy of their bloody deeds. I have noticed on many occasions that when I talk to an official about the commercial interests of Turkey, or discuss her relations to the European Powers, he is entirely frank and his voice is natural and clear, but when I change the conversation and speak of these dreadful massacres, his whole bearing is different. He instinctively looks around to see if anyone is within hearing distance, draws his chair up closer to mine and speaks in suppressed tones. It is an unwelcome subject, and no one feels free to say what he thinks. I am very sure that the whole nation is conscious of its guilt, and blushes with shame whenever the subject is alluded to.

If we could call back the many dead, then it



## 8 Through Armenia on Horseback

would be worth our while to talk about the massacres, but since that is impossible, we must needs treat them as a frightful nightmare, and concentrate our attention on the remnant of the nation which has suffered untold persecution, and do what we can to relieve their present distress. Let the dead past bury its dead, while we look to the future of the survivors and give them the good cheer of a helping hand.

In an interview with the Sultan, Mr. Whitman mentioned this fact, but His Majesty would not listen to it. He declared that it was his wish to have the massacres investigated, for it was his opinion that the stories which had reached the western world were gross exaggerations. He insisted, therefore, that this matter should not be neglected, and assured us that we should find his statements to be true.

Let me add another incident, which occurred when we were well on our way, and which proves rather conclusively that the Sultan was willing that my determination to investigate fairly and critically should in no way be interfered with. We reached Erzeroom after many days of exceedingly hard travel. We had put two dangerous mountain passes behind us and were pretty well worn out. The constant

nervous strain had told on us all, and one of our party had fallen so seriously ill that the constant attendance of a skilled physician was required. We fully expected to leave him and push on without him. He was very brave and plucky, though, and assured us that when we were ready to start he would go with us. When I tried to dissuade him, telling him frankly that I considered his life in peril, he still persisted. And so the matter rested for a few days.

Suddenly I learned that our route was to be changed, and my suspicions were aroused. Instead of going to Bitlis, one of the sections where the massacres had been most tragical, and where they were accompanied with horrors at which the whole world shuddered, we were to go to Erzingen, thence to Sivas, thence round the mountains rather than across them to Khar-poot, and so to the South and the Mediterranean. This would interfere with me very greatly, for I wanted to get into the interior and among the Kurds as speedily as possible. The other route had been taken by others, while the one I chose was through the midst of the worst things that had happened. All my arguments, however, were of no avail. I was told that the roads were blocked, that no caravan had been

able to get through, and that even the mail ponies, who face almost any kind of weather, had been at a standstill for five days. Matters looked rather blue for awhile, and on thinking the subject over I concluded that there were just two things for me to do, either to go back to Trebizond and so home with the consciousness of failure, or else to push on alone with the help of a few zaptiehs, or mounted policemen, for protection. I discussed the subject with Mr. Whitman from every possible standpoint. I showed him plainly that to leave out the Kurds and Bitlis was to surrender the most important factor in the problem. He insisted that it was not the Sultan's wish to evade any examination that I might wish to make, that the objection to the Bitlis route probably arose from the fact that one of the party was ill and did not care to venture on the more dangerous route. I refused to accept that statement and admit candidly that I had a strong feeling that my preliminary letters had given offence, and that under some plausible excuse the whole affair was to be brought to an end. When I talked with those who were best acquainted with the subject they said, without a single exception, "Bitlis of course—any other route would be a suspicious compromise." One of them added



significantly, "If you wish to get at the kernel of the nut, go to Bitlis; if you do not, go to Erzingen."

Then I said to Mr. Whitman, "Let us have this matter settled at headquarters. Write a telegram which will reach the Sultan, and then we shall know where we are." The telegram was written and sent, and I assure you, the next forty-eight hours were fraught with great solicitude. At the end of that time a clean-cut answer came back to the effect that if I had chosen the Bitlis route, we were to go that way and no other. The matter was settled, and settled my way, and settled by the proper authority.

I say, therefore, without any hesitation that the Sultan was entirely honest in his desire to give me free scope. It is no doubt true that he does not agree with many of the conclusions I have reached, for in my judgment the subject has been misrepresented in the Palace. Still neither he nor anybody else would respect me, and in fact I should not respect myself—which is perhaps the most important thing—unless I told the truth as I understood it, and told it without any fear or the hope of favor. I do not say that I am right in my deductions, but I do say that the Sultan agreed to give me the

use of a perfectly free and independent pen, that he kept his agreement, and that I have used it to the best of my ability.

The Sultan honestly believes that the facts of the case have been misstated to Europe and America, and this was his chief motive in allowing our investigation. I am bound to say this because I believe it to be true. Of course my friends will not agree with me in this matter, and equally of course I shall be accused, with more or less plausibility, of being one of the Sultan's apologists. I cannot help it however. My business is not to tell what other people believe, or to corroborate their statements, but to describe the situation as I saw it with my own eyes, regardless of what either friend or foe may think. I do not say that my opinion is the correct one, I only say that it is my opinion.

But while I think the Sultan is honest in his belief, I also think he has been misinformed. Neither he nor anyone else knows how many were killed during these massacres, for accuracy is impossible. The Armenians cannot be safely trusted because their terror makes multiplication easy. The Turkish officials cannot be trusted, for since all Europe was infuriated their business was to minimize the affair. The

documents sent to the Palace, the only means of information which the Sultan could command, were a tissue of falsehoods. They threw all the blame on the Armenians, they exaggerated the number of Turks who were killed, represented the call to arms on the part of a few revolutionists as the uprising of a whole people, and denied that any villages had been given up to plunder. I speak with all the more emphasis of this matter because I have seen some of these documents, have had them translated, and therefore feel sure of my ground. Shrewd as the Sultan is, and no one will deny that he is the ablest sovereign that Turkey has had in more than a century, he is perfectly powerless when he calls for exact facts. He must needs trust somebody, and if it is for the interest of those whom he trusts to conceal the truth, they can do so successfully and with impunity.

He is the most unenviable man on the planet. Not only uneasy, but insecure, lies the head that wears the crown of Turkey. The Sultan is not only in danger from without, but most of all in danger from within. He leads the narrowest life of any monarch in Europe, is practically an imperial prisoner. He lives in isolated splendor, suspicious of everybody, and



with good reason to be so. He never goes beyond his garden walls, and whatever news he gets is filtered through a dozen secretaries, who read the papers every day and translate into Turkish such items as they choose. But of this, more anon.

It is unnecessary to add that the historical associations which fill Asia Minor, as various as the flowers which fill its fields in summer, had a peculiar attraction for me. One may travel in any direction and the memory of great deeds and important events will follow him. There is hardly a village, certainly not a city in the long route from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean which does not contain relics of the past, not merely the past of two thousand years ago, but of the still more distant times when the human race was primitive and making its first feeble efforts at civilization.

Far away on the northeast of Armenia, rises in magnificent splendor Mount Ararat, its snow-covered summit seventeen thousand feet from the level of the sea, a landmark which all the people of the region, Mohammedans as well as Christians, regard with a feeling of awe. It is one of the spectacles which I have always desired to behold, for it is a centre around which so many events that we hold sacred revolve.

Then, too, just south of Erzeroom, is the fabled location of the Garden of Eden. The guide-book says that the mercury often falls to fifteen or twenty degrees below zero, which led me to suppose that Adam and Eve must have needed some warmer covering than fig-leaves; but the legend had its fascination nevertheless, and my imagination was stirred. When one of my New York friends, an Armenian, assured me that that section of the country was famous for its apples, I felt that there must be some truth in the legend, and so the dream of going through the Garden of Eden on horseback was a very pleasant one.

If you stand on the shore of the bay of Alexandretta, far in the south-west, you see two pillars, so I had read, four or five miles distant. These were erected close to the spot where the whale and Jonah had their mutually disagreeable experiences, Jonah being glad to get rid of the whale, and the whale being equally happy, doubtless, to get rid of Jonah. Whether the story is true or not, it has its charm. There is so much of history which is legendary, and so much of legend which may contain a veritable historical nodule, that discrimination is not always easy, and one may be pardoned if he enjoys the right emotion at the wrong time.

At any rate, it was an interesting possibility that I might see the place where everybody said and somebody believes the whale and Jonah parted company.

Only a short distance to the north of Alexandretta lie the famous plains of Issus, where the Persians met the forces of Alexander the Great. The bay in front was covered with Persian war vessels while the hills in the background were a vast camp. From the deck of a steamer anchored in the offing one could get a glimpse of the whole marvellous scene with "the mind's eye, Horatio," and become intoxicated with the memories therewith connected.

Then, too, the traveller is reminded of St. Paul, for the city of Tarsus is almost within range of a good field-glass. Strabo tells us that in respect to philosophy and general education it was the successful rival of Alexandria and Athens. Here Paul spent his infancy, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, untouched by Roman influence or Greek heresies. It would be a great privilege to follow him in his boyish wanderings, and to visit the place where he spent the earliest years of his life.

Asia Minor has been the battle-field on which eastern and western monarchs have met in





A TURKISH BEGGAR.





mortal combat. Trebizond was an important city under the Romans, and Trajan made it one of his capitals. Hadrian erected public buildings there, and spent great treasure in improving its harbor. Later on, in the thirteenth century, Alexius Comnenus founded an empire on the Black Sea shores, with Trebizond as his capital. His palace was famed for its magnificence, and the royal family were equally famed for their beauty, even the Moslem rulers of Persia seeking the daughters' hands in marriage, on account of their comeliness. One may find there bits of the old wall, and several watch-towers whose age runs back to the Christian era.

And from this city of Trebizond to the distant south you are constantly reminded of the past, of the most heroic part of the past. You meet the Crusaders on their way to Jerusalem, and find numerous relics which remind you of those days when war was the business of mankind. In Bitlis, in Diarbekir, everywhere indeed, troops have marched for conquest, and long caravans of camels have for twenty centuries brought the products of the Orient to a western market.

You will not be surprised, therefore, that over and above the sad question of recent massa-



ces, I felt the peculiar attraction which only historical associations can furnish. To withdraw for a time from the unceasing activities of the nineteenth century, and journey through the vast silences of a land whose air was thick with memories of ancient days was, irrespective of other considerations, an opportunity not to be lightly laid aside.

Add to this the conviction that I might possibly be of some service to the stricken and despairing Armenians, that my sympathies were with them in their unspeakable misery, that an independent investigation of their condition and their prospects might lay new facts before the American public, and you can see that though I dreaded the journey, for I had some slight knowledge of its inevitable hardships, I at the same time undertook it with high anticipations. Whatever might happen, it seemed to me a duty to be performed, and that ended the matter. So with a heavy heart I packed my steamer-trunk and started for Paris.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE GOLDEN HORN.

FROM my room on the fifth floor of the Pera Palace Hotel, Constantinople, I had a magnificent view. Far off, on hill-tops, were a barracks and an almshouse, types of our modern civilization, which is cruel with one hand and kind with the other. On the near left was the sleepy water of the Golden Horn, a mirror in which the sun seemed glad to reflect itself, and beyond it an immense cemetery on the slope of a steep ascent, while on the extreme left rose the picturesque minarets of San Sophia, so old that it is crumbling, beautiful once, but now impressive because of its decrepitude. Immediately in front of my window was another cemetery, whose headstones dated back to time immemorial, and leaned every which way, as though they were tired of recording the alleged virtues of the dead, and wanted to rest on the sod. Of

course there was a grove of cypress-trees, as there is almost everywhere in Turkey where mortality lies in its last slumber, and to these trees came at sunset, a flock of ravens, thousands in number, announcing their approach with strange cries. At sunrise in the morning they took their departure, many of them flying so close to my balcony that I thought of Poe's marvellous poem, and wondered if they were coming in to "perch above my chamber door" with that ill-omened word "Nevermore." I grew quite nervous with something like superstition, thinking that perhaps they were warning me against the undertaking to which I had set my hand.

Nearly all travellers are in love with Constantinople, and declare that it is the freest city on the planet, but I prefer some other, almost any other place to live in. It is exceedingly picturesque and exceedingly dirty. It rained every day but one while I was there—a single fortnight—and that fact may possibly warp my judgment. I don't like caprice either in women or men, and still less in the weather. In Constantinople the weather never makes up its mind to do anything. If the sun shines at ten in the morning, you may find yourself in a pelting shower at five minutes past ten. Tired



of raining, the sun comes out, and tired of sunshine the rain pours down. If you put on your waterproof, you wish you had left it at home, and if you go out without it you are sure to indulge in language which sounds like a series of explosions. The weather may be entirely satisfactory during other months of the year, but in November it has the delirium tremens and appears to be wholly irresponsible.

And the streets ! Why, one would think that Tammany Hall had been in office for a dozen generations. They are so unutterably filthy that you lose your self-respect as you dodge one mass of mud and find yourself ankle-deep in another. A sane man would regret the day of his birth if he were doomed to live in such a place, and death would be robbed of all its terrors.

You must needs walk in the street, as everybody else does, and you must also be very nimble to keep from under the wheels of passing carriages. There are sidewalks, that is, there are what it would be an undeserved compliment to call sidewalks. In some places they are five feet wide, in others they are three feet wide, and in still others they are whittled down so narrow that you rub against the side of the

building as you walk. Widen the streets of New York until the curb is within four feet of the houses, leave them uncleaned for twenty generations, then let a November rain do its worst for a fortnight, and you will have a fair sample of the highways of Constantinople.

And yet it is in some respects a very beautiful city. I hired a boatman one drizzly day when the sun promised to come out but sent half-a-dozen showers instead, and drifted as lazily and leisurely as any Turk could do on this golden sheet of water. From a distance the city seemed at its best. It had a royal appearance, with its queer architecture, of as many varieties as the changes through which it has passed in ages gone, and its slender minarets from which the Muezzin calls the people to prayer in a strained falsetto that must sooner or later produce bronchitis.

There is something almost startling to a stranger in this cry. It breaks on the still air like the note of a trumpet, and he looks about him wondering what has happened and tries to guess whence the sound proceeds. At last he discovers the Muezzin on the high platform of the minaret, and then remembers that he is in a Mohammedan country.

In Christian lands we do not use the human

lungs to call people to prayer, but ring a bell in the church-tower. The Muezzin is simply a substitute for the church-bell, and I must confess that I prefer his voice to the clangor of the iron tongue.

But I had been led to suppose that when the stated times for prayer arrived, every true Turk would at once go down on his knees wherever he might find himself, in the warehouse or on the street, and engage in his devotions. That is what my school-books told me in my boyhood days, and I placed implicit confidence in their statements. But the Muezzin produced no effect whatever on the motley crowds. They were quite indifferent to the call, and never in Constantinople did I see a man saying his prayers. I once said to a gentleman, long a resident in the city :

“The Mohammedans are no more strict in their religious observances than we Christians are. I supposed the whole city would be covered with prayer-rugs, and I have yet to see the first one.”

He shrugged his shoulders and replied : “When you get into the interior where the people are more primitive, the prayer-rug will be in evidence, but here—well, there is neither too much Mohammedanism nor too much



Christianity. Our religion does not interfere with our business. You will find a few worshippers in the mosques, but—" and here he put on a quizzical look—"the streets are dirty, as you see, and it is not nice to kneel in the mud. You Christians are religious on Sunday, and we Mohammedans are religious on Friday, but during the rest of the week both you and we have so much to do that we can't afford to waste much time in prayer."

"Ah, yes," I replied, inwardly admitting that so far as Christianity is concerned his criticism was rather well founded.

"Constantinople," he added, "is a city with a mixed population. You can find representatives of nearly every race on the globe. You Europeans are here in full force, and you have not brought very much religion with you. Your only purpose in being here is to bleed the poor Turk. We are your orange, and you leave us only the seeds and the peel. We don't think much of your Christianity, for the Prophet has given us something as good as anything you possess. If you had set us a better example we might have followed it, but if you have copper and we have copper, why should we exchange what we have for what you have?"

"But we think that in the comparison our

religion is golden," I broke in, in order to draw him out.

"Well, if it is gold," he answered with a queer look in his eyes, "why don't you show us some of it? You have taken all our business, and so far as I can see your only interest in Turkey is what you can grab. If that is Christianity, I will remain satisfied with what you are pleased to call my 'paganism' a little longer. Give me something better than what I have and I will take it, but up to the present moment you have for some reason refrained from doing that."

"But why should you be lax in your religion because we are lax in ours?" I asked. "If we cannot teach you, why can't you teach us?"

"Well, if you want the truth, here it is, as I see it. You Europeans have not given us your religion, but you have demoralized ours. Far away from the great commercial centres, that is to say in Anatolia which you are to visit, you will see real devotees; but here we are so crowded by competition, and so worn out by the effort to hold our own against the Goths and Vandals of neighboring nations who have stolen nearly all we ever possessed, that the spirit of religion has died out among us, and we are not very much better than the Christians."

I thoroughly enjoyed my two hours of *dolce far niente* with my stalwart boatman, and so far as my memory would serve, recalled the incidents in the life of Stambol, of Galata and of Pera, now sitting quietly and peacefully under one municipality. I was specially drawn to Stambol, which has a historic interest all its own, running along the edge of the water, and terminating with the old Palace at Seraglio Point, which, if it could speak of the intrigues which have been concocted, and the murders which have been committed there, would make each particular hair stand on end. I was glad that I could not remember the whole story, and felt a sense of relief that the present Palace occupies a different site. In Stambol are to be found the genuine, true-blooded, old-fashioned Turks, who still retain a remnant of their ancient usages.

When I afterwards visited San Sophia, I took off my muddy shoes, and following the universal custom, put on a pair of slippers so large that I lost myself in them two or three times. They charged us about half-a-dollar each for the privilege of looking at the old pile. I paid the money without a murmur, but Hermann, my dragoman, a Roumanian Jew, became wroth. His sense of economy, not to speak of pro-





AN OUT-OF-DOOR COFFEE-STAND.





priety, was wounded, and when Mr. Whitman and I had disappeared in the interior he took the priests to task. "Ar' n't you ashamed of yourselves," he cried in good Turkish, "to charge strangers an exorbitant fee for visiting the church of God? What do you suppose will become of you if you commit such outrages? Suppose an earthquake should come and swallow you up, mosques and all?" He would have continued indefinitely, but they were fairly frightened at his earnestness, begged him to say no more on the subject, but put on a pair of slippers which they held out, and follow us. We rather enjoyed his recital of the incident, for he really meant all he said, and was so deeply afflicted by the extortion, as he called it, that he kept referring to it until we told him to hold his tongue; after which he maintained a sullen silence, broken only by certain mutterings to himself as we walked through the holy place admiring its beauties, but most of all impressed by the memory of the scenes to which it had been a dumb witness.

If that magnificent building could only speak, what a story it would tell! My heart throbbed with excitement as I wandered through its aisles, for somehow the ghosts of the past came trooping by me in the dim twi-



light, and I felt the intoxication of mingled pride and horror. Here beneath these wonderful arches scenes have been enacted which change one's blood into an icy current, tragedies and even comedies, solemn ceremonials and farces, the profoundest devotions and the extremest fanaticism, Christian services and Moslem rites, plots, intrigues, treachery, bloodshed—all have occurred on these floors, all have been seen under this dome.

In the beginning it was a Christian temple, one of the first tributes of royalty to the new religion. The Emperor Justinian employed ten thousand men in its construction, and so wildly enthusiastic was he that he assumed the part of a common workman and cheered the men to greater activity. So proud was he of his achievement that he cried out, "O Solomon, I have even surpassed thee!" and the whole city was given over to festivity and gratulation.

Nearly ten centuries later, May 29, 1453, Mohammed II. with his brave soldiers conquered the city, and San Sophia was doomed. Its career as a Christian temple came to an end. At that time the church was filled with twenty thousand men, women, and children who sought refuge within its walls. These

were divided among the victors as slaves, and taken to the camp of the enemy. It was a frightful, a heart-rending scene. Mohammed entered the church with his immense retinue of officials, ascended the high altar, offered prayers of thanksgiving for his victory, and then declared that the building should thereafter be used as a mosque. From that day to this the Muezzin has summoned the people to prayer in the name of God and His Prophet.

What stirring times those were! I recalled the incidents of the sieges and found myself getting excited while doing so. They had been buried in the deep recesses of my brain for more than twenty years; but I lighted the flickering lamp of recollection and followed them in the darkness, until at last they were all collected.

Mohammed II was a determined foe and a fine strategist. He was bound to conquer the proud city though it should cost him half his army. He had kept the Christians within their walls for fifty-three days, and food was so scarce that their courage had well-nigh given out. They saw that fate was against them, and their hearts sickened at the sight of the horde of Moslems. They begged Con-

stantine to surrender, but he bade them to go back to their posts and die like men.

When the decisive moment arrived the King with a few of his knights went into the great church of San Sophia and stood before the altar and the Cross. There was no hope, and his eyes filled with tears. There was nothing left but to die bravely. The Byzantine Empire was close to an inglorious end. The King partook of the sacred emblems and turning to the little group of officers said: "I pray for forgiveness if I have injured anyone in thought or deed." Then he left the church, vaulted into the saddle and rode to defeat and death.

Such rushing memories are overwhelming, and when we left the place we had hardly a word to say to each other, for silence alone seemed equal to the occasion. When I reached the hotel, I went straight to my room and sat for hours gazing at the great city which lay stretched before me, calling from the hidden recesses of my brain the long series of historic events which I had half forgotten.

As the days passed we wearied of delay, and were very anxious to get off, but in Turkey you gain nothing by being in a hurry. All Turks worship the god of procrastination.



They have but one rule—to put off doing a given thing until to-morrow, and to-morrow generally means any time next week. They are quick to promise and slow to perform. A homœopathic dose of American enterprise would bring the whole Empire to the verge of nervous prostration. When I said, “We must get off at once, for the winter is advancing, and snow may block our way,” the reply was cordial and satisfactory. “Most certainly,” said the speaker, and then he gave additional reasons for haste. But he never dreamed of doing what he had declared ought to be done, and was immensely surprised when we reminded him of what he had said.

We reached Constantinople on a Wednesday, and it was agreed that we should start on the following Tuesday. I supposed that Tuesday really meant Tuesday, and so busied myself with necessary preparatory work. On Monday we were told that we must be tired after our long trip from Paris, and were requested to “repose ourselves” in the hotel for a few days. This was a great disappointment, for all my belongings were packed in two panniers; but the invitation came from a source which made criticism impossible. So I grumbled in my heart but said nothing.

There is one word which constitutes the key-note to the nature of the Turk. It is the word "Jawasch"—if I have spelled it correctly—and it means, "Go slow." I was reconciled to the delay, however, when a friend to whom I spoke rather hotly on the subject quoted a proverb which the modern Greeks console themselves with, and which runs as follows: "There is no trouble but has its bright side."

Next, we were to start, to a certainty, on Friday, but Wednesday brought us word that the escort had not been fully decided upon, and that it was impossible to go on that date. A second time I unpacked my panniers, having need of the things contained therein for daily use, and settled down in a fit of despair; for by reports from eastern Anatolia we were informed that winter weather had set in early and the cold was intense. Friday came and we were still in Constantinople with a rather dark outlook. There was a Tuesday boat, however, and we should take it; but Tuesday's boat went without us. An Austrian steamer would sail on Saturday, but on Friday night our cabins had not been engaged. We were desperate by that time, and I declared that I should either start for the East on that day, or take the next Orient express for Paris. We went

on board the *Daphne* and found, luckily, that there were only two or three other passengers, which fact placed the necessary number of cabins at our disposal, and on that morning the vessel weighed anchor at half-past eleven, though we had been told to be on board promptly at eight o'clock.

I speak of this incident with a purpose, not in the way of carping criticism or special fault-finding. It fairly illustrates one of the salient characteristics of the Turk. He is not conscious of his peculiarity, and would feel offended if you charged him with it, but he never, even when he goes into battle, does anything on time. He is always late, and being late, always thinks himself early enough. He is at least a thousand years behind the age, but he indulges in the hallucination that he is in the vanguard of modern civilization. He seldom travels, and therefore has no standard by which to compare himself with the people of other lands. If half Turkey should take a holiday, and spend a month in Vienna, Paris, Berlin, London, and New York, it would go home with such revolutionary ideas that the Empire would not last six months unless much needed reforms were instantly put on foot. If a man who lives in a mud hut is under the



impression that all the rest of the world lives in mud huts, he is likely to be satisfied with himself. But give him a glimpse of the houses in which our middle class live, amid comforts and conveniences if not luxuries, and the chances are that he will tear down his mud hut and build something better. The average Turk knows little or nothing of other nations, of modern ideas or modern inventions.

Turkey is partly located in Europe but it is entirely Asiatic. If you go to Constantinople from Vienna or Paris you become confused and even dazed. You have dropped into a place which has no affinity whatever with the nineteenth century, and you scarcely know what has happened to you. You are in the Middle Ages in which the farmer plows with an iron-shod stick just as the men of Israel did three thousand years ago, and simply tickles the soil, while at the street-corner sits or rather squats, a man who will write a letter for anyone who does n't know how to use pen and ink. If you wish to know the hour, you find that it is always twelve o'clock at sundown, and as the sun sets at different times, according to the season, twelve o'clock is a variable point. Do you wish to take a steamer up the Bosphorous or along the sea of Marmora, the

company will hand you a schedule in which the boat is advertised to start at four, but when you have acquired some knowledge of the customs of the people, you will know that it will leave the wharf whenever it happens to suit the convenience of the agents.

If, on the contrary, you go to Constantinople from some Asiatic city, you are delighted to find comforts and conveniences which you have not heretofore enjoyed. The streets are less filthy, the household arrangements are better planned, and the general atmosphere has a flavor of enterprise. In a word, if you go from the parlor down into the kitchen you are disappointed if not disgusted, but if you come up from the cellar into the kitchen, everything seems to be orderly and satisfactory. The cities of Eastern Asia Minor are in an unutterable condition, and in the comparison Constantinople is a veritable paradise. I cannot tell you how clean and neat it seemed when I reached it after my lurid experiences between the Tigris and the Euphrates, nor can I describe the shock I felt when I first looked at it through my memories of London and New York. When, therefore, I tell you about Constantinople, everything depends on whether you and I are walking in the Bois de

## 36 Through Armenia on Horseback

Bologne, or plowing our way through the filth of Diarbekir. In the latter case it is a dream, in the first it is a nightmare.

Even in Constantinople there is no such thing as a city delivery of letters. If you write a note to a friend in Galata or Stambol, you must hire a man to take it to its destination. A million inhabitants and they have so little to say to each other that a city post-office is unnecessary! Think of what would become of New York if there were no means of getting a letter to a neighbor except by special messenger! That condition of affairs is simply inconceivable. Almost every relation of life and certainly every department of business would be seriously interfered with. In fact, the postman is more than a luxury, more than a convenience, for without him our daily life would take on another complexion. I wanted to announce my arrival to Dr. Washburn, President of Robert College, in the near vicinity of Constantinople, but it was impossible to do so. There was no mail, and the telegraph operator could only make his wire click in Turkish.

Then again, there are practically no means of transportation for even heavy goods except by horses or donkeys. If you build a house, the timber is carried on the back of a packhorse, the



bricks in the same way, and every particle of raw material that you need. A dray would do the work in half the time, but why should a man desire to do it in half the time when he has all eternity before him? Go down to the quay where an ocean steamer is unloading. There are huge bales of several hundred-weight and barrels and hogsheads to be carried to the warehouse. They are all slung beneath two stout poles which rest on the shoulders of four men and so transported from one point to another.

The stranger may be surprised at this primitive method of doing things, but the Turk thinks it the best way, and shrugs his shoulders with something like contempt when you speak of more economical and better methods. You can hardly appreciate the feelings of an American, whose work is all done by machinery, as he wanders through the streets and sees that men take the place of horses. How can Turkey with its generally excellent climate, its rich soil, its abundant mineral resources, be satisfied with methods which are at least a half-millennium behind the times, while other nations are inventing and using all sorts of agencies to make life more comfortable and more profitable? You cannot resist the con-

viction that Turkey is an anomaly,—interesting, curious, fascinating, but still an anomaly. Moreover, you find it easy to prophesy that she must change her course, and become more amenable to the spirit of the age or retire from her European position and give place to a civilization which keeps step to the music of progress.

After this long parenthesis, let me say that we were a hopeful company as we steamed out of the Golden Horn and entered the beautiful Bosphorus, the Bosphorus as beautiful on both shores as a poet's dream. I had no notion of the hardships we were to encounter, and was simply joyful, gleeful, even hilarious over the fact that years count for nothing when the heart is buoyant, and that at sixty-four I felt younger than the men of thirty and thirty-five, who immediately surrendered unconditionally to the rough seas which we encountered in the Black Sea. I have been intimate with Neptune for a long time, and his malicious pranks are thrown away on me, but my comrades grew suddenly serious and sought the solitude of their several cabins.





A TYPICAL CROWD.





## CHAPTER III.

### TO TREBIZOND.

**A**N isthmus is a strip of land uniting two large territories. The Bosphorus is an aqueous isthmus uniting the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmora. It is not more than eighteen miles long, but they are eighteen miles of as exquisite scenery as can be found in any part of the globe. The word Bosphorus is of classic origin, and in the Greek means "ox ford," so called from the fact that Io when she had the good or bad fortune to be transformed into a heifer swam across it. At its widest it is only one and a half miles, and at its narrowest something less than half a mile.

It was a drizzly day when we steamed northward from Constantinople, but neither drizzle nor chill air could restrain my enthusiasm. On either side are fine residences, the summer resort of thousands who pant during the

heated term for a breath of fresh air. They dot the plains and the hillsides, and make one wish that he had several lives that he might spend one of them there.

I met an Armenian on deck and had a long and confidential chat with him. He was a young fellow, who had escaped the massacre in the city, and evidently had very little love to spare for the Turk. His picture of those awful days when at least four thousand of his countrymen were clubbed to death in the streets was so vivid, that I had a queer feeling as of something crawling up my spinal column. I was warned not to hold converse with him as it might create suspicion, and so hamper my movements, but as my sole purpose in visiting the East was to talk with just such men and to hear what they had to say, I did not regard the injunction as imperative.

"Look!" he said, pointing to Robert College on a high prominence, "that is the noblest institution in all Turkey, and its president, Dr. Washburn, is doing more to make the country what it ought to be than any other living man."

And I think he told the simple truth. Robert College is in splendid isolation—a lighthouse in a land of darkness. The Sultan has



organized a great many schools in his Empire, for which due credit should be accorded him, but Robert College has set him a stint which even he with all his resources can hardly perform. It has shaped the careers of thousands of young men, and furnished them with the opportunity of a livelihood, if not of professional fame. Go where you will, through any of the Balkan States or into the interior of Turkey, and if you see a man who is superior to his surroundings, and who serves as an encouragement to his neighbors, you will probably discover that he is a graduate from this college.

Then I began to speak of the massacres, but he looked at me so sharply that I saw he was wondering whether I belonged to the detective service.

“I am an American,” I said quietly.

Then we understood each other. The word “American” was like Aladdin’s open sesame and he opened his soul to me.

“Those were bitter days,” he said with mingled sorrow and indignation. “Our people were sacrificed to the passions of the mob.”

“And the number of the murdered?” I asked.

“No one can tell. It is mostly guess-work.

There were quite enough however. They lay in the streets, by the dozens, by the score. Cold, stark bodies, men who had committed no crime, suffering for the folly and stupidity of the few hotheads."

"How was the work done?"

"Generally with clubs," he answered. "There was no noise, no riot, no shouting, but my people fell like wheat before a scythe. It was a day of doom, and the heavens seemed to suddenly grow black. And after it all Europe was dumb. She said nothing and did nothing. The Powers have condoned the offense. The Turk enjoys immunity when he wants to murder a few thousand Armenians."

He was very bitter, and spoke in suppressed tones.

"If you had been armed?" I asked.

"Ah, in that case," he replied, "history would have had a different story to tell. What sublime courage, to kill men who have no means of defense!"

Then I was called to dinner, but my appetite was gone.

Our journey through the Black Sea was without incident specially worth noting. We had about seven hundred miles ahead of us, but during the first two days only were out of

sight of land. The coast receded like a bent bow, and we steamed along the string. The waters are well named Black, not only on account of their color, but also because of their inhospitality. They were in a perfectly frantic mood, and treated us to that short chop which makes the motion of the vessel resemble a corkscrew. I cannot say that I enjoyed it, but still I managed to hold my own, which is a good deal more than some of my friends did. From neighboring cabins groans issued, which indicated that the gentlemen were not in an ecstatic condition of mind, and I heard language from one of them which, if not profane, was as close to being so as the English tongue admits without trespassing. When we reached Ineboli, however, the company assumed a cheerful aspect, and as I attempted to jocosely express my sympathy for their sufferings, they quietly assured me that they had been perfectly well, but had had private business to attend to which made it impossible to be on deck. The statement was literally true.

Ineboli is a type of all the other towns on the southern shore of the Black Sea. It is beautifully situated on a hillside, and is extremely picturesque if viewed from a vessel's deck. There is no harbor, however, and the



roadstead is dangerous in rough weather. We landed at eleven in the morning and were told that we could have two or three hours on land. So we went ashore in boats and roamed about the town, visiting the market-place, the mosque, and all other points of interest. We were to start, so said the Captain, at two in the afternoon, but it was eight o'clock when we weighed anchor.

Samsoun, our next stopping-place, reminded me of the Bay of Naples. Again we went ashore, and with the Armenian question in mind, I asked if there had been any serious trouble in the town.

"There are Armenians here?" I asked.

"Yes, and many Greeks also."

"Well, during the massacres what happened?"

"Nothing," was the reply. "There was a good deal of anxiety, but nobody suffered."

"How was that?"

"Well, our governor has a good head on his shoulders. He sent word to all the roughs who had gathered with the hope of a chance to loot Armenian houses, that they would be much safer out in the country than in the town. He told them plainly that they were not wanted here, and the sooner they got

away the better it would be for them. They took the hint, and the place was not disturbed. It was a narrow escape, but it shows what one man can do when he wants to do it."

I may be permitted to say, now that my journey is at an end, that if other governors had been equally wise, thousands of able-bodied Armenians would be paying taxes to-day, who are sleeping in the churchyards of Anatolia. A vast deal of the responsibility for wholesale murder rests on the shoulders of the officials who fomented trouble and gained great personal benefit therefrom. This is not the place in which to discuss that subject, but I shall devote myself to it later on and show that many of the horrors at which we tremble might have been averted if the servants of the Government had done their plain and simple duty. They were barbarous enough to make capital, political capital out of carnage, and in many instances they have blood on their hands, as Macbeth did, which no water will wash out.

Samsoun was once, in the far-away past, a flourishing Greek settlement. It has a very interesting history, was captured by Lucullus during the Mithridatic war, and was made a free city by Cæsar. At the beginning of the Christian era it was one of the richest, if not the

richest of the trading towns on the Black Sea shore, and when the Comneni ruled the Empire of Trebizond, it was regarded as an important commercial centre. It was a great relief to leave the ship for a few hours and walk through the town with an eye for any bits of old wall, or other relics which we might discover.

We made but one more stop, at Kerasun, before reaching the end of our journey by water. If one had the time, he could spend a few days here very profitably, but to tell the truth, I was so anxious to get on that I looked at the place with careless eyes. Like all other towns on the coast, it is saturated with historical reminiscences, and I felt almost guilty because I showed so little interest in it. I learned, however, that winter had set in, long before it had been expected, and my soul was troubled within me at the slow progress we were making. I had already heard of some of the dangers we were destined to encounter and had great fears that we might be blocked on our way to the interior. It was impossible, therefore, to do this or any other place the justice which it had a right to claim.

I found it somewhat difficult to appreciate the fact that all this region of country is classi-



cal ground. The history of these villages which either squat in squalor on the seashore, or seem to be hung up on the hillsides, runs back through more than twenty centuries, and every acre of ground has its own story to tell. Here in Kerasun for instance, or in its immediate vicinity bloody battles were fought between the Persians and the Romans, before the Star of Bethlehem made the world brighter by its shimmering glory. Mithridates overran this section with his armies, and met the Romans here with varying fortune, sometimes winning a signal victory and then again suffering a frightful defeat. At last, when Pompey succeeded to the command, the power of Mithridates was broken, and at nearly seventy years of age, after a reign of more than half a century, he saw that victory was beyond his grasp, and so committed suicide to avoid falling into the hands of his enemies.

One is startled by the memory of these facts. Only the visiting scholar recognizes them, for the people who live there in our day, are too busily engaged with their apple-orchards, their tobacco-fields, and other products to either know or care anything about the past. You wander through the dirty streets, note the picturesque costumes of the various nationali-

## 48 Through Armenia on Horseback

ties, look northward on the placid waters of the roadstead, or south on the rocky promontory with its Byzantine fortress, and the remnants of an old wall, which was once used for purposes of defence, but no one can tell you the history of the town, for no one knows that it has a history. The Greek, the Armenian, the Jew, and the Turk are content to look after to-morrow's business, and have neither time nor inclination to look at their yesterday.

You ask me about the scenery. Well, it is simply soul-stirring and soul-satisfying. From the mouth of the Bosphorus we travelled by water close upon seven hundred miles, keeping within two or three miles of the coast most of the time. A range of mountains extending that distance, some humble and lowly, others resembling huge giants who could not conceal their stature, is a sight worth a long journey to see. The shore is rugged and rocky. Great promontories intrude upon the sea, against which the waves dash in ceaseless but futile attempts to drive them back, only breaking themselves into white showers of foam with a noise as of rumbling thunder. At first we saw forests, with here and there a brilliant red or yellow, reminding me of a New England autumn. But as we approached the Caucasian

range, the mountain-tops were covered with snow, and the chill in the air increased. It is here on this stern coast that the brave sailors of the Turkish navy are reared. These hardy fellows, in frail craft, sail the treacherous sea, carrying their goods to market, or plying their trade of fishermen. They must needs know no fear, for they are in constant peril, and their mode of life fits them for the naval service into which they are sooner or later drafted.

I always like to get a view of the land from the deck of a vessel. The scene is quite different from anything to be had when one is plodding through a country on foot or on horseback. You have a larger scope of vision, and can take in the coast-line for miles with all its indentations and juttings. I think one understands a country better when he sees it in this way—a long panorama with all its peculiarities exposed to view.

I remember the revelation which was made to me of Ireland seen from the sea, in 1880. I was then engaged in distributing food to the famished people of that stricken land. The Duke of Edinburgh, who commanded a fleet of gunboats anchored in Galway, offered me his services, which were only too gladly accepted. Every vessel was loaded with barrels



## 50 Through Armenia on Horseback

of breadstuffs, and as the famine was most severe in the coast villages, we were thus able to reach them without the long delay of transportation by land. When the task had been accomplished, the Prince assured me that no one could appreciate the beauty of Ireland unless he watched the unfolding picture from the sea, and offered me the use of the *Hawk* that I might enjoy this privilege. I boarded her at Galway and slowly followed the shore-line, putting into some friendly harbor at night, all the way to Londonderry. When anyone tells me that he has visited Ireland, I immediately declare that it cannot be seen at its best until you have Old Neptune as your guide, philosopher, and friend. It is only under such circumstances that the green fields of Erin can be fully appreciated.

My Black Sea experience was of the same nature. A vast expanse of water on one side, and green mountains on the other, holding villages to their bosoms as a mother holds her babe. In the pastures herds of sheep and cattle; from the midst of the forest the curling blue smoke of some hidden farm-house; on the steep hillsides the white rocks which form the bed of some torrent when the snows melt; above all, the wide expanse of azure sky, em-

bossed with hurrying clouds, and at sunset saturated with all the colors of the rainbow. That is a picture to touch the heart, bring you close to nature, fill you with awe at the beauty of the world in which we bivouac for a time while on our way to heaven. The spectacle is so impressive that it becomes oppressive. Words fail you, and you sit in silence, in gratitude, in worship.

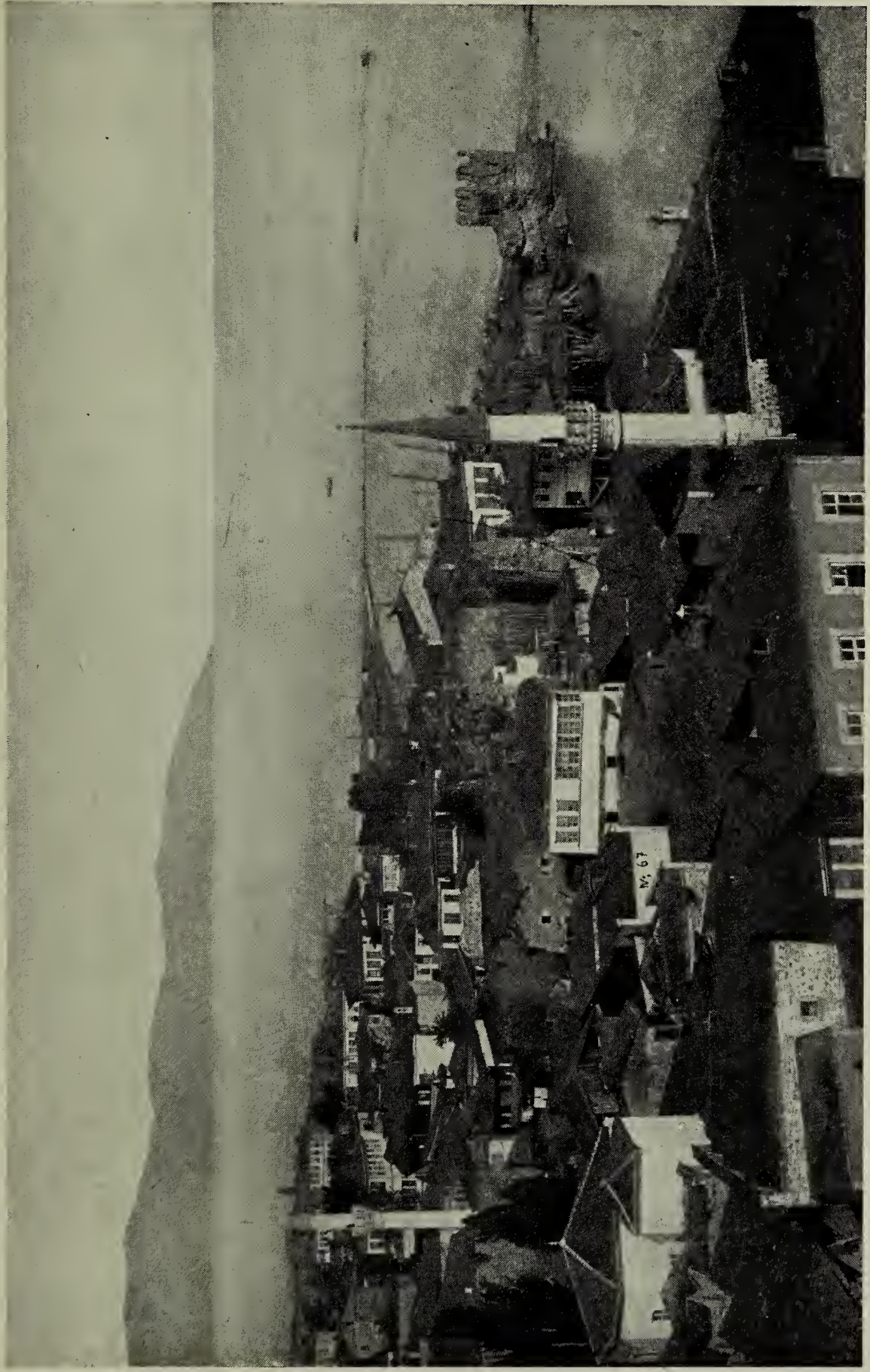
We dropped anchor in front of Trebizond at last, the end of our journey by water, and the point from which we were to penetrate the interior. The mountains of Lazistan, one or two of them rising eight thousand feet, snow-covered and capped with clouds, bade us a rather chilly welcome. I was glad to have reached this beautiful city, for at the moment when I landed my real work would begin.

Here, too, even more than elsewhere, one finds historic ground. A little matter of seven hundred years ago this city was the capital of the Empire of Trebizond, a sporadic affair which lasted a couple of centuries only, and was then brought to an end by the troops of Mohammed II. When the famous Ten Thousand were on their retreat, they encamped here, and were treated with great hospitality by the then Trebizondites. And I imagine no

ten thousand men in any quarter of the globe or in any age, were half as glad as these when they pitched their tents, had a decent place to sleep in and plenty of good things to eat. They had come over the dangerous mountain-passes to the southward, and from a neighboring summit had gone wild at the sight of the sea and their consequent escape from famine and exposure to cold. After that Trebizond was captured by the Romans and the emperor Hadrian laid out large sums of money in improving its appearance. Then the hordes of Tartars got possession of it, and under their *régime* it fell into decay, but later on the Greeks became its masters and added to its importance as a commercial *entrepôt* between the far East and the markets of Europe. There are old walls, broken towers, ivy-covered, and other relics to be seen in every direction. But my heart was not with Romans or Greeks, or Tartars. I thought only of recent events, to which Trebizond was the threshold, and was anxious to set foot on solid ground, that I might wander at my leisure through the streets where Armenians had been sacrificed, and discover, if I could, the secret reasons for wholesale massacre.

How it did rain when we landed! It was a





TREBIZOND.



wild, a furious day, and for a time it was doubtful if the passage to the shore, only half a mile away, could be safely compassed. We were all eager, however, and took our chances, suffering from nothing worse than a good drenching. It was but a few steps through mud, ankle-deep, to what was, by way of a strained compliment, called a hotel. Poor or good, though, made no difference to us; we rushed pell-mell under its shelter, and thought ourselves very fortunate. The proprietor met us with a face flushed a brilliant crimson at the prospect of having a few more guests. Trebizond is not frequented by tourists; indeed there are no tourists in that quarter of the globe.

A few days before we arrived, Chakir Pacha reached the city on his way to the West, with a considerable retinue of officials. His special purpose in visiting different parts of the country was to find where the reforms to which the Sultan had given his approval could be instituted. His people occupied three of the five rooms in the hotel, and our party were consequently compelled to double up. They were very genial gentlemen, and withal thoroughly conversant with the condition of Armenia, as viewed from a wholly Turkish standpoint. I talked with them quite freely,



and found them willing to admit that there was ample room for improvement in the methods of government.

“But,” said one of them, “why is it that Europe demands reforms for the Armenians, but no reforms for the poor Turk? It seems strange to us that when Turks and Armenians are alike suffering from abuses, the Powers should discriminate in favor of one class and not have a word to say for all the rest.”

“Europe,” I answered, “asks that the Armenians shall have freedom of worship. Is there any injustice in that, or any discrimination against the Turk?”

“But,” he replied, “the fundamental law of the land provides that every subject of his Majesty shall worship as he pleases without let or hindrance.”

“Yes, I am aware of that,” I said. “There is no fault to be found with your laws. The difficulty is that they are a dead letter. You kill an Armenian because he is a Christian.”

“Oh, no,” he replied, “that is a mistake which all Western people have made, but the statement does us great injustice. No Armenian has ever suffered on account of his religion. Ask the Armenians themselves and they will tell you that this is true.”

“What then was the cause of the disasters?” I asked.

“Politics,” he replied, with emphasis.

“Nothing else?”

“Absolutely nothing, and if you look the subject full in the face, you will find that what I say is true.”

Then he added: “I am in the service of the government, and you will naturally think me prejudiced. But there are good Turks, although Europeans cannot believe it, and Turks who would not shrink from criticizing existing methods if there were any reason to do so. I do not say that we are entirely without fault. Are the people of any nation perfect? But I do say that Turkey has had great provocation, and it is not strange that she has been restless under it. And, moreover, I assert that the Armenians have brought the calamity on themselves by their ambition for autonomy.”

It was a very interesting interview, and I was glad to have the Turkish side of the question from the lips of a man who had been connected with public affairs for many years. Now that I have investigated the subject for myself, I am forced to say, that while there was some truth in what my friend stated, there was also a good deal to which I cannot subscribe. The

## 56 Through Armenia on Horseback

Armenians have suffered as a nation, but they have not sinned as a nation. They have been crippled almost beyond the possibility of recovery. A more hopeless people it has never been my lot to behold. The number of those who have lost all, and must begin life anew is beyond the reach of computation. At every missionary station in the country you will find orphans by the score, made orphans by as base a crime as ever stained the page of history. I have looked into their sad faces, and seen so many widows, that I wonder why the thunderbolts of God have not been hurled at the offenders. To punish the guilty is one thing, but to punish the innocent is an act which ought to rouse the avenging anger of the civilized world. The hills and valleys of Armenia echo with the cries of the tortured who never lifted a hand against the government, who were as loyal as any Turk in the Empire. That is why Turkey is hated. Why should we not tell her that she is hated, and that she will be hated so long as such cruelties are permitted? The deliberate attempt to exterminate a race is not sanctioned by the spirit of this century. That attempt has been made, and unless all signs fail it will be made again when Europe shall so far forget the past as to render immunity probable.



I have great respect for the gentlemen whom I was privileged to meet in Trebizond, but after as careful and thorough a search for facts, as time and circumstances permitted, and with no other wish than to be just to both parties, I find it impossible to accept their conclusions. I do not blame them for defending the policy of the government of which they are a component part, and they must not blame me if I tell the truth as I see it, rather than as they see it.

I spent several hours each day wandering through the rain and mud in order to find every vantage-ground from which this beautiful city can be seen, and had a feeling all the while that I was in a sort of fairy-land, or that I had possibly died and was on the confines of another world, as in very truth I was, that is, the Asiatic world. I could no more get accustomed to the people of Trebizond, with their quaint costumes representing half a dozen nationalities, than they could get accustomed to me. We were curiosities to each other, and if they enjoyed themselves looking at Mr. Whitman and myself, half as much as we enjoyed ourselves looking at them, we all had a good time.

One of my first visits of course, was to our

American Missionary, Reverend Mr. Parmelee, who like all the other missionaries I have met, had that expression of suppressed anxiety which is so pathetic. For a score and a half of years he has been a resident of Asia Minor, a gentle gentleman, a thoughtful scholar, a careful critic, and an honest workman in a field in which there are many discouragements. So many discouragements! As I looked into his sad face, I could n't help thinking that he and such as he ought to have a good time in the next life, for they have certainly had a very hard time in this. I can conceive of the heroism which drives a man into the midst of such horrible surroundings, but am painfully conscious that I myself should not be equal to the work. I suppose everybody has his allotted field, and I am a thousand times grateful that my days' stint is not to be done in that belated and antediluvian country. It moves so slowly and has fallen so far in the rear of human progress that we should have to stand still a couple of thousand years if we wanted it to catch up with us.

This reverend gentleman was thoroughly conversant with the events of the massacre period, and he spoke of them with a degree of judicial impartiality which surprised me. If I

had been through such scenes, had witnessed the bloodshed of those days, I certainly should be incapable of speaking with calmness of the perpetrators, but he spoke quietly and conclusively, not hotly against the Turk, as I expected, but blaming the Armenian revolutionists for giving occasion for bloodshed. There are two sides to every question, even when that question relates to massacre, and my missionary friend, who had carefully studied Turk as well as Armenian, could do justice to both.

Americans do not appreciate their missionary service. In a far-off way we admire these men and women whose lives are full of self-sacrifice, but if we could once look into their homes and get a glimpse of the awful isolation in which they live so cheerfully, we should see to it that they wanted no comforts which money could buy. They have too small salaries and yet the world is full of gold. They spend themselves, and also what they can spare from their slender incomes, more than they can spare, for the relief of the poor who are all around them. No man can resist the impulse to empty his purse when he sees such depths of misery as even I, in my short sojourn, have beheld, and I can only say that the



## 60 Through Armenia on Horseback

Western world ought to double its generous gifts to those whose lives are saddened by their ceaseless ministrations to the wretched creatures, widowed and orphaned, who knock at their doors for a word of encouragement or a crust of bread. But I must not dwell on this subject further at this point, for I hope to speak of it more in detail farther on.

Before I close this chapter, I would like to refer to an interview which I had with a gentleman in Trebizond who was present during the massacre there, and who was thoroughly posted on all the details of the affair. I shall not give his name because I neglected to get his permission to do so, and for other reasons which need not be mentioned. Let it suffice that he was not a Turk, that he was perfectly fair-minded and that he was so constituted mentally that he could treat the Armenian and the Moslem with equal justice.

Moreover, I refer to this interview because it showed me that though the Turk was inexpressibly cruel in his methods, he nevertheless had great provocation. While in America, my sympathies were unreservedly with the Armenians. I imagined that they were the victims of religious fanaticism, that they had done absolutely nothing to bring on them-

selves this frightful attempt at extermination. When I got my first glimpse of the actual facts in Trebizond, my opinions were somewhat modified.

I sat for two hours with this gentleman, and we discussed the question from every possible standpoint.

“Where did the fault lie?” I asked. “Was it with the Turks or with the Armenians?”

He hesitated for a moment. “Do you mean,” he queried, at length, “do you mean in this particular locality, or shall I speak generally?”

“As to other places,” I answered, “I shall visit them in the course of the winter, and prefer to make my investigations on the spot, rather than at arm’s length. You were here, you saw the dead in the streets, you have lived here many years, and know the peculiarities of the people. Pardon me, therefore, if I say I prefer to have you speak of that which took place under your own eyes than to anything that comes in the way of hearsay.”

“Well then, let me tell the story of what I myself saw,” he responded. “You know something of Bahri Pacha?”

“Yes,” I answered, “something. He was very unpopular, was he not?”

“Deservedly so,” he said with emphasis, “but that is no excuse for what occurred. One day when he was walking along the main street of Trebizond, a couple of young men, probably members of the revolutionary committee, fired upon him, their purpose being assassination.”

“You know that to be true?” I asked.

“The fact is as I state it,” he replied. “Now if these fellows had been caught and executed, as would have been perfectly proper under the circumstances, the massacre would not have taken place. They fled, however, and the authorities naturally came to the conclusion that the Armenians were in sympathy with them, and knew their hiding-place. The people were in a furious state of excitement.”

“And what then?” I asked.

“The Turkish officials, urged by this vehement clamor of the populace, called upon the Armenian community to deliver up the miscreants, and added that unless they did so it would be impossible to answer for the consequences. The assassination of an official, whatever may be his character, is an act of rebellion.”

“And what were the consequences?” I asked.

“That five hundred men were killed.”

“The number was no larger than that?” I queried.



“That is a somewhat conservative estimate, but after careful investigation I think it about the fair figure. They were frightful times and the worst passions and fears were aroused. Business was at a standstill, and we were all paralyzed. As many Armenians as could find a way of escape fled, most of them to the Russian border.”

“And the women and children?” I asked.

“There were strict orders not to harm either the one or the other, and those orders were willingly obeyed by the soldiers. Only two or three women and children suffered, and they by accident not by design.”

“But why,” I asked, “did the authorities punish the innocent as well as the guilty? That seems to me the strangest thing of all, and as an American I can’t understand it.”

“It was the effect of generalization,” he answered. “The Turk has not yet adopted the methods of our century. He may do so by and by, but not for many generations. It was the Armenians who made the attempt at assassination, and it was the Armenians who must pay the penalty.”

## CHAPTER IV.

### ZIGANA PASS.

“WE shall start to-morrow morning early,” was what I heard late Saturday night. I slept but little for we were to cross the threshold and begin our eight hundred miles of wanderings. It was a healthy excitement, however, which made me restless, and when the morning came and the welcome sunshine came, I felt as though twenty years had been magically subtracted from the sum total of my age.

Mr. Whitman and I were up when the first grey streaks of morning came trembling through the window, for we were told that the baggage must be ready by seven o'clock. I forgot for the moment that seven means any time before twelve in the vocabulary of the Turk. I jammed all my worldly possessions into my two panniers, and long before the clock struck the hour was ready. Our camp-beds were in a strong canvas bag, while another bag

held our saddles, and our rifles were within easy reach.

“Are there any brigands on the road?” I had asked the day before.

“No,” with a shrug of the shoulders, was the reply, “probably not, but still it would be good policy to have your guns handy.”

“I have heard so many stories of robbers,” I said, “but have rather imagined that they were romances, told for the purpose of making it agreeable for the traveller.”

“A few years ago,” he answered, “the country was infested by highwaymen, but of late years they have mostly disappeared. These gentlemen of the road were generally Lazis and they went into pillage as a matter of business, to make a livelihood. We had rather hot times then, and it was unsafe to go ten miles back from the city without a guard. But brigandage had its uncertainties. It is one thing to kill, and a rather different thing to get killed. When the chances were in favor of the Lazis, they plied their trade with vigor, but when the chances were about even, and especially when they were against them, they did not take to the road so eagerly. They are now largely engaged in smuggling, and on the whole they find it more profitable than



brigandage. Still, if you happen to have a gun you may as well take it. It never does any harm to be prepared for an emergency."

These Lazis, by the way, are a very interesting people. Lazistan, which lies to the eastward of Trebizond, is a mountainous district, and it gives its rough peculiarities to the people. The Caucasian range looks down on them, and has made it so hard to get an honest living out of the soil, that they resort to dishonest methods without any compunctions of conscience. They have fine physiques, and marvellous powers of endurance. And, withal, they are more independent, reckless, and cruel than the Kurds. Subjugation in any accurate sense has proven to be a very difficult task. They are masters of themselves, and allow no man to dictate to them. They do as they please, and if the government sends troops to whip them into obedience they take to hilly regions where it is impossible to follow them.

And yet, I have heard they have their good qualities. Every spring large numbers go to Erzeroom and vicinity, where they command fair wages as gardeners and tillers of the ground. While there they are straight-forward in their dealings, are quiet and orderly



A GROUP OF LAZIS.





and trustworthy. When the autumn comes, however, they hanker after the old life and return home, to watch out for opportunities, which may mean almost anything that an honest man does not care to do.

After a frightful delay, our baggage was got rid of, and then we went to breakfast at eleven. I ate with a hearty relish, for it was impossible to predict when we should get another meal as good. I felt like a camel who drinks all he can hold, not knowing whether another opportunity will ever offer itself.

Yes, the road was said to be good, and so we took what were called carriages, that is, miniature Noah's Arks, to which three horses who had seen better days were attached by means of harness which was at least a century old, and had been patched a thousand and one times by bits of ancient rope. The rope and the leather were in about equal proportions, but the fact that we were really off disarmed all criticism. Neither the muddy streets nor the fear of footpads dampened our ardor, nor yet the consciousness that the mountains ahead were frowning and would do what they could to bar the way to Erzerum. It was a ten days' journey, as we expected to travel, before we could halt at our first important

## 68 Through Armenia on Horseback

stopping-place, but we were in good trim and ready for any fate.

After driving a mile along the coast, we took a sharp turn to the southward and began a gradual ascent. On the left, the Dierman Su—the word Su meaning water, or river—poured itself over its rocky bed with noisy vehemence, and we kept along its bank for many an exciting and pleasant hour. There were plenty of trout in its muddy current, and it touched me deeply that I could not cast a fly and try my luck—for Isaac Walton and I are close friends—but as I did not visit Armenia to catch trout but rather to fish for facts, I suppressed my piscatory impulse, and sank back on the hard cushions with a sigh.

Of course the road was rugged, and of course it ran close to the verge of the ravine, and of course Mustapha drove as near to the edge of the precipice as it was possible to do without going over, and of course we expected at least a dozen times that horses, carriage, driver, and passengers would make a very bad looking conglomerate two hundred feet below, but after a while we got used to that sort of thing, and our nerves calmed down. I don't enjoy this peculiarity of the Turkish driver.

He is a good fellow, and very skilful in handling his team, but he is too eccentric. On level ground he allows his horses to go their own gait, as though he had all eternity before him, and it was sinful to hurry, but when he has a steep hill to descend, and short curves to round, he seems to become exhilarated, chirrup to his beasts, and goes at a break-neck speed, trusting to Providence to guard our safety a good deal more than the average American is accustomed to do. My hair had a tendency to stand on end, and indeed I may add that it acquired the habit of doing so. Mustapha, however, knew his business, and his horses knew him, so no accident happened.

Our stint for the afternoon was a small one, and at five o'clock, when we reached the little village of Jevizlik we were something less than twenty miles from the Black Sea. We were in the midst of a vast group of mountains, some of them young and little, others large and hoary with age, rising above their neighbors as a giant towers above children.

Let me tell you how we disposed of ourselves for the night. The Khan was a specially good one, far more comfortable than the average. It was two stories high—a very unusual thing—and the lower story was utilized for horses,



while the upper was devoted to the use of the few travellers and the many camel and pack-horse drivers.

I threw myself, pretty well worn out, on the thin mattress of the divan, when someone, cried out in considerable excitement :

“Excuse me, Doctor, don't do that. Please get up at once.”

“And why?” I asked in my innocence.

“Because—well, pray get up, and I will tell you.”

When I was on my feet, he said : “It is not exactly safe to lie down there. You don't know who slept there last night, or what disease he may have had. And besides, the chances are that the mattress is thickly inhabited by a large assortment of creatures whose acquaintance you will not care to make.”

It was an awful revelation, and for hours I did not recover my equilibrium. The mattresses were immediately removed, and our camp-beds put up. Then I stretched myself out in comparative safety, and enjoyed a half-hour's refreshing sleep.

But it was cold, and there was no fireplace. The mercury had taken a sudden drop, and I was chilled to the marrow.

“Bring a mangal!”

cf. p. 73  
273

Now a mangal is a large brazen vessel on legs about a foot high. It is piled full of charcoal which is set ablaze in the open air because the fumes are deadly. When the coals are red, and the dangerous gas is exhausted, it is placed in the middle of the room, and is a feeble substitute for a stove. One can warm himself by installments, first his hands, then his feet, and afterwards such parts of his body as he can bring close to the heat. Three quarters of you are like ice, and the other quarter is half roasted. But in spite of its defects, the mangal serves the traveller a good turn, and he is very grateful for the live coals which enable him to imagine that he has an open fire.

At eight we had dinner, after which I wandered out into the night for a look at the stars—which were specially brilliant—and by nine was under my blanket dreaming of the dear ones at home.

The next morning we were up betimes, just as the first sun-rays crept over the snowy hill-top and broke through the window. I washed in seventeen drops of water—all that was obtainable—and went down to the bank of the river. I found that the village is situated at the junction of the Dierman Su and the Meramana

## 72 Through Armenia on Horseback

Su, the latter being Turkish for Mother Mary, a fact which excited my curiosity. I was not long in discovering that there was an old Christian monastery in an almost inaccessible spot, two hours away, that the pious folk had named the river, and that the name had been retained, during how many years, no man could tell me.

We had an early start and a steady climb. The road, cut out of the solid rock, and none too wide, led us up a constantly ascending zig-zag, revealing at every turn a new and still more beautiful view. When tired of riding, we walked for a mile or two, and at least a dozen times sat on a rock to enjoy the wonderful panorama. There was nothing to say, for the scene was too magnificent for words. It seemed to me that the Lord had taken special pains with that part of Asia Minor, and the contrast between nature and the people was almost painful. They do not deserve to live in a country so full of resources, for they make so little of them. The words of the old hymn came to my lips more than once,

“Where every prospect pleases,  
And only man is vile,”

but I prudently kept silent.



When we reached Hamsi Kur, or village, we were three thousand feet up in the air. A cold wind was blowing, and we were tired out, and chilled to the marrow. The Dierman Su flowed, a raging torrent, in the valley, for we had tracked it to somewhere near its source, and just as we reached the Khan a severe snow-storm came up. Not a pleasant prospect for the morrow. Zigana Pass was just ahead of us, and snow under such circumstances means delay, if not danger. However, we made the best of everything, and hoped for sunshine in the morning. The possibility of spending two or three days in that dreadful Khan was exceedingly depressing. In the next room to us were thirty muleteers and camel-drivers, mostly Persian, who looked as though they had not taken a bath since they were born. For the first time, I realized the statement that brigandage is not yet dead in Anatolia, for a tougher set of men it has never been my lot to spend a night with. They wore a large assortment of variegated rags, and were picturesque to the last degree. Long knives seemed to be a necessary part of their attire, and I could n't help wondering whether they were for use or only for ornament. On the whole, I concluded that it was safe to let them

know that we had six well-armed cavalrymen in our company. When you remove temptation from these fellows you can have a good night's sleep—otherwise not.

At seven we were called to dinner. The table was on a sort of balcony, and I found my overcoat, buttoned tight under the chin, none too warm, for the mercury was tumbling down towards the bulb of the tube. In the middle of the table a large bowl of soup was placed, and each of us, armed with a spoon, helped himself. It was a sort of loving-cup business which does not appeal to me very strongly. It all depends on one's bringing up, and I was not brought up in that way. As Mr. Lincoln said: "If a person likes that sort of thing, it is just the sort of thing he likes." We also dispensed with knives, and utilized our fingers instead. This does very well if you cannot help yourself, but if you can, there are better methods of eating. I have nothing to say against it—for others, but for myself I have a strong prejudice in favor of both knife and fork.

Mr. Whitman has a genius for making everybody comfortable, and when he brought out from unknown depths a fine old cheese in the shape of a cannon ball, and gave me

what in my boyhood days I called a "hunk" of it and a couple of crackers, I felt that I was on the pinnacle of human bliss, and immediately put my pannier on end, spread my port-folio on the top, sat on the edge of my camp-bed and began to write a letter home, perfectly happy.

At five the next morning a star, more brilliant than any other star in the heavens—I think it must have been Sirius—shone through my window. A hasty breakfast, not preceded by the ablutions to which I am accustomed, and someone shouted:

"Zigana Pass to-day, gentlemen, and we must take to the saddle!"

Until twenty years ago I spent a good deal of time on horseback, but the pigskin and I have since then been utter strangers. I had my doubts, therefore, but was careful not to speak of them. What has to be done should be done as cheerfully as possible, and so I assumed a degree of courage which I by no means possessed, and laughed at the fears which one or two of the company kindly expressed.

My horse was a wretched brute, a fellow who refused to go at anything but a funereal pace except under the spur of the whip, and



then he broke into a trot which made me feel that I was astride a picket-fence which had the delirium-tremens. "Seven hours of this sort of thing," I said to myself a dozen times, "and I shall be a cripple for life." I could n't help wishing that Anatolia had been swallowed by an earthquake before Mr. Bennett dreamed of investigating the Armenian question. I got well into the saddle, however, after a while, and forgave my horse for being hard-gaited, because he was sure-footed. He had one peculiarity which was rather blood-curdling. Whenever we reached a specially icy and dangerous spot he would insist on walking within six inches of the edge of the precipice. Whether he was tired of life and meditated suicide, or whether he was only bent on homicide, I have never been able to determine, but he made me feel two or three times as though it was only a short distance from that portion of Asia Minor to heaven. A man ought to have a pretty level head on his shoulders when he can look from his saddle down into a ravine five hundred feet below, and if he does it several hours at a time he ought not to be regarded as a coward if he confesses to being a bit nervous.

The summit of Zigana was six thousand

feet up in the air, but we had the day before accomplished one half of the climb. There was enough left, though, to tax our energies, and as we progressed the cold became intense.

There were two places which I dreaded, only two. So much snow and ice blocked our way that at these points we rode, as it were, lengthwise along the roof of a house, the road inclining at an angle of about forty-five degrees. The horses were well sharpened, and took their steps with great caution. For a few minutes each time we turned a slippery point, I held my breath, and then came a sigh of relief, which contained more gratitude than I have ever felt before in my whole life. I inwardly cried "Amen" when Mr. Whitman remarked that if we ever reached the next village, he would go into the mosque and say a little prayer.

But what scenery! There is no living or dead language in which it can be described; but I thought again and again of some lines in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. It seemed as though the Almighty had taken a double handful of mountains, and hurled them pell-mell into this part of His vast domain. Their summits were covered with snow many feet deep, and the sun poured his glories over the landscape with

## 78 Through Armenia on Horseback

such generosity that our eyes were fairly dazzled. I stood in need of the smoked glasses which I had somehow misplaced or lost, for the spectacle was painfully bright.

The mountains we had seen yesterday sank into comparative insignificance, for the sudden increase in height and grandeur was remarkable. I felt as though I had left an infant school and entered a group of Titans. And yet, above them all was Zigana Peak, cloud-capped, stern, solemn, magnificent, up whose steep side we were wearily toiling.

But we were all in good humor, for a brighter day never shone. For hours we journeyed, now looking up to the path we were to travel, and now down, far down, perhaps a thousand feet below, on the path we left behind us, a dark thread on a burnished silver background, chaffing each other in Turkish, French, German, and English. Three cavalrymen in the rear, and three in the front, we had nothing to fear, and as the rare atmosphere at that altitude was stimulating, we became almost boisterous, like those who have sipped old wine.

But look ahead for a moment! What is that long line of atoms in the distance, approaching us slowly? I whipped up my horse,



—we were in single file, of course—and was soon within speaking distance of one of the Beys.

“What is that centipede coming this way?” I asked.

“A caravan; camels, probably,” he answered.

“Camels? Why, the path is so narrow that there is scarcely room for ourselves. How in the world are we to get by them?”

“I don’t know,” he replied; “but it must be done somehow. Keep your beast well in hand, and be sure to take the inside.”

In the next half-hour they were upon us, four or five caravans with perhaps a breathing space of twenty rods between each two. The outlook, so far as I was concerned, was rather rugged, for my horse had evidently been a mule in his last previous incarnation, and the worst elements of his nature as a mule had been inherited by the horse. He would do as he pleased in spite of rein, whip, and objurgatory language, and a good deal depended on his being pleased to take the inside track, instead of offering it to the camels as a matter of courtesy.

Mr. Whitman was in an equal plight. His beast took an odd notion to get frightened, as

## 80 Through Armenia on Horseback

though he had not seen a thousand and one caravans before. He began to caracole in the most coquettish way, and then to back. As there were only four steps to take before going over, Whitman made ready to leap from the saddle, but by good luck the horse concluded that the weather was not fine enough for a leap of that kind.

The inside track! That means being in a snow-drift to your stirrups, with a bulging rock on one side and the huge box with which the camel is laden on the other. Scylla and Charybdis! Be careful not to knock your knees against the rock when your horse plunges, and equally careful not to let the corner of the camel's box break a bone. Keep a cool head. Say to yourself that a man can die only once, don't allow yourself to take a nap, and be patient. You have before you a large number of camels, and you are to have a very uncomfortable thirty minutes. It may help to smooth your wrinkled front to solemnly swear that you will never go over Zigana Pass again, either in winter or summer, but that sort of flattering unction will not prevent your leg getting broken, unless you are careful. No matter about the friends at home; no matter about the Armenian question; just look after your

own dear self, for accidents do happen to the best of folk when they are imprudent.

However, the end of the agony came at last. The camels were doubtless glad to get rid of us, but as for my gratitude at getting rid of them, it was deeper than the chasm on the edge of which we were unsteadily making our way. When with rapid thought I contrasted Anatolia with New York, you will not perhaps think me eccentric if I expressed a preference for New York.

The last thousand feet of our climb to the top of the Pass reminded me of a fly walking up a window-pane, but it was delightful and fascinating to a degree which makes description hopeless. The air was crisp, delicious, and exhilarating. It was a sort of ice-cream air, and every drop of blood in the body pulsed with delight. In the whole heavens there was only one slender cloud, which served to emphasize the glory of the day. And the sky! Ah, what can I say? It was the sky of your happiest dreams, the sky of a heavenly vision. It was much more than "deeply, darkly, beautifully blue," for there was a mystery about its indigo color that was amazing. And then as your eye fell from the zenith to the horizon line, the color changed slowly to a lighter shade. It



## 82 Through Armenia on Horseback

really seemed that it could be only a few steps upward to the Celestial City, and that this gorgeous curtain of indigo-blue had been let down to prevent our seeing too much.

Then again, the mountains! Peak after peak, rising in a monotony of magnificence that was appalling, covered everywhere with snow which shone like so many acres of chopped-up diamonds. It was the most oppressively exquisite spectacle my eyes had ever beheld. "Asia Minor," I said to my soul, "may have its dangers and its discomforts, but one half-hour with such a scene as this, and all else is easily forgotten."

The downward journey after an hour's rest at the top was rather wearing. It is always easier on the whole to go up-hill than down, and when you are in the saddle this is especially so. The valley stretched itself in the hazy depths below, and we could see our path zig-zagging for miles. Our horses were cautious, for the way was steep and slippery.

There was only one little incident which occurred when we were half-way down the mountain that comes to mind as I write. It was not of great importance, and yet it seemed to me as pathetic as it was significant. We had just turned a sharp angle when I saw

half-a-dozen huge birds perched on a rock or lazily flying a few hundred feet away.

“What are they?” I asked.

“Vultures,” was the reply, “and at least five feet from tip to tip. You see they are eyeing us suspiciously.”

“And why?” I asked. “There is room enough for them and us in this big world, is n't there?”

“They have probably just left their prey,” was the reply, “and are wondering if we shall interfere with their finishing their meal. There must be a dead animal of some kind close to us.”

True enough. At the next bend we saw the carcass of a pack-horse which had furnished them with food. They had beaten a retreat at our approach, but would return as soon as we were safely out of their way. My horse pricked up his ears and shied at the sight, and I could not blame him, for a like fate would be his if he should meet with an accident.

The number of dead creatures to be seen in this region is somewhat startling. I have counted a score during a day's travel. It must be a very considerable item of expense added to the cost of transportation. The camel and the pack-horse constitute the freight trains of

## 84 Through Armenia on Horseback

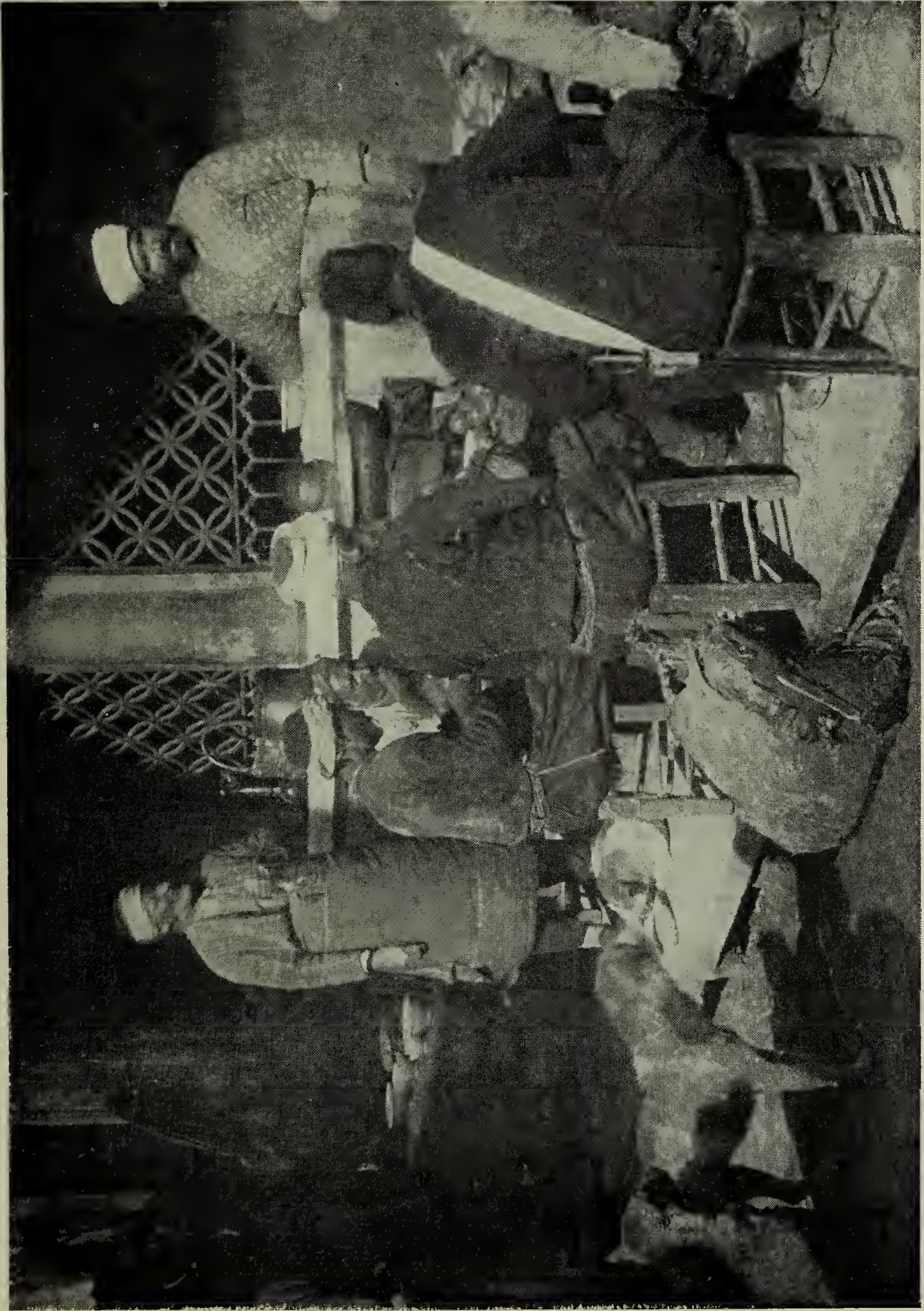
Anatolia. They carry all the goods to market, and are always to be found on the road from Bagdad to Trebizond. When a camel goes over the precipice, the owner's loss is about forty pounds sterling, and when the poor fellow who goes over drags half-a-dozen others after him, for they are all roped together, the loss is very serious. Dead horses and camels must be reckoned with when the price of the goods to the consumer is finally fixed.

At about five o'clock we reached the little village of Zigana, three thousand feet below the summit, weary to the very marrow, and every separate muscle in our bodies quivering. It was a hard day's work well done, and we were all used up.

Dirt in the Khan? Words fail me. An earthen floor on which every sort of refuse had been thrown from the time when the place was first built. The very air we breathed was unclean. But what cared we? I ate a few morsels—the food was beyond the reach of my digestive organs—then had my camp-bed put up, and at six o'clock with my coat and overcoat on, I fell asleep and knew nothing more until I was called the next morning.

Zigana Pass is one of my treasured remi-





A RESTAURANT.





niscences. I have been introduced to it, have had a friendly chat with it, have parted with it, and sincerely hope never to see it again. On a cold winter day, it furnishes the traveller with an experience, the memory of which will outlast time and go with him into eternity. This experience varies from danger to ecstasy. Before sundown you have passed through all the moods and felt all the emotions of which human nature is capable. You are glad, you are sorry; you are in terror, you break forth in exclamations of delight; you are exhilarated, you are depressed; you regret that you were persuaded to take the trip, and you are a thousand times glad that you did take it. The rushing torrent a thousand feet below, foaming in its madness, reminds you of Dante's Inferno, while the wonderful sky overhead is so beautiful that your eyes are filled with tears.

Ah, that was a glorious day! But I was told, by those who ought to know, that I should not expend all my adjectives of admiration on Zigana, for there was another pass, not far away, which would tax my utmost resources of descriptive expression. I did not believe it possible for nature to show me anything grander than Zigana, but—well—I have since then changed my mind.



## CHAPTER V.

### OVER KOP DAGH.

AFTER Zigana, we traversed a high country, but it was somewhat monotonous. The plateau was on the average from three to four thousand feet from sea-level, and there were quantities of mountains, nothing else, in fact. If we had suddenly dropped from the sky into this region we should have admired it greatly, and expended all our spare adjectives in describing it. It was about equal to the Adirondacks, for example, but hardly worth noticing after the experience we had recently passed through.

The days were a constant delight, but the nights were a horror. I am glad to keep company with my horse from sunrise to sunset, but I object to sleeping with him all night. I have the same objection to camels and donkeys, and buffaloes. After a hard ride it is not restful to order your servant to sweep a corner of

the stable, and put up your camp-bed. I can begin the day with a cup and a half of chocolate and a raw egg, and ride six hours without feeling seriously hungry. And I can eat four sardines, and a lemon, and a few crackers for lunch, and ride six hours more without complaining of fate. Yes, after twelve hours in the saddle I can be satisfied with a very poor chop, or some bread and cheese—indeed I have happily grown thin on that diet, a consummation devoutly to be wished—but I have a strong prejudice in favor of a decent bed. I do not ask for linen sheets or for a hair pillow, but I do prefer to go to bed without my top-boots, and also without my fur overcoat. In asking this much I can hardly regard myself as unreasonable, and if I add that you will oblige me by giving the cattle a separate apartment, I am still within the bounds of propriety. When a man is doing work which tries his nerves, he ought to have two things, a night-shirt and a wash-basin. If he can neither change his clothes, nor shave, nor wash for ten days, he becomes demoralized. A clean face and clean hands help to keep the heart brave, and the consciousness of uncleanness throws a man out of mental gear.

We passed Gumush-Khaneh, a town filled

## 88 Through Armenia on Horseback

with hospitable Greeks, and once famous for its silver mines, and the little village of Tekke, built on a hillside and reminding me of pictures of Hebrew towns which I used, as a boy, to find in the old-fashioned family Bible, and Varzahan, with its two mediæval ruins—the people are all Armenians and these ruins date back as far as the twelfth century—and then came to Baiburt, the only important town between Trebizond and Erzeroom.

Baiburt, we found to be an interesting old place with about seventeen thousand inhabitants. Of course it is also built on a hillside, as were most of the cities of earlier days, because they were more easily defended. And, of course, also, there is a castle on the brow of the hill. This particular castle was built by the Armenians, how long ago no one knows. And, by the way, there are to be seen everywhere many reminders that there was once an Armenian kingdom, with good old-fashioned robber barons, whose strongholds, in almost inaccessible positions, make, in their ivy-covered age, a picturesque spectacle.

What surprised me most was to learn that in all Baiburt there is not a single physician. How a community of that size can get on without medical service is a mystery. But



probably the people do not get on : they simply die.

I know the operation of the law of the survival of the fittest, and I suppose that all the Turks who could possibly be killed by that law have been laid low, while those who remain are, so to speak, copper-fastened against destruction. It is not, however, that the Turk accepts this law and acquiesces in it, and, therefore, does little or nothing when he falls ill, but that his fatalism is frightfully operative. To us it would seem to be not simply ridiculous, but an evidence of idiocy to let a disease take its course, and to apply no remedial agencies, but to the Anatolian Turk it is a fundamental article of faith. He may consent to so far compromise as to make use of charms or incantations of a mild character in order to hasten his recovery ; but, in certain portions of Asia Minor, at least, he will have nothing to do with a doctor.

As a consequence, the mortality is something startling, especially among the children. When anyone is taken sick, some old woman is sent for who deals in herbs which have the aroma of magic about them. The patient gets well, and that is God's will ; or he dies, and that is God's will. Now while there is some truth in

this fatalism, and while it certainly does induce a mental and spiritual condition of repose which is admirable, I must confess that it does not appeal to me personally when carried to this extent. When I had an attack of the gout, some years ago—the only thing I inherited from my grandfather—I called for a doctor, and called in stentorian tones. My faith did not destroy my responsibility to do all I could, as it does with the Turk. I cannot see how the Lord can approve of a man's making no effort himself and expecting Him to do the whole work. That, however, is fatalism, and to a greater or less extent it demoralizes every Mohammedan people.

We were very kindly received at Baiburt. Sirry Bey is officially connected with the public-school system of Turkey, and the little ones turned out in force. They were gathered—a whole battalion of them—in the square, and as we passed them they sang some hymns. After an awfully hard day's ride this came to us as a novelty and a refreshment. We were surrounded by great numbers of the men and women of the city, who seemed to regard us as immense curiosities, the men following us by hundreds, and the women peering at us through their thick veils.

At last we reached the Kaimakam's house, hungry, but in fairly good temper. The hope of a solid night's rest in a decent bed and under a decent roof was very alluring, and we were not disappointed in either respect. After the inevitable coffee and cigarette, Mr. Whitman and I retired to the apartment assigned to us, and made ourselves comfortable until dinner was announced. In the Khans we had to be careful as to where we sat, and where we hung our clothes; but here we enjoyed the consciousness of security, and with a wild and hilarious abandon, threw our fur overcoats in one corner, our top-boots in another corner, and in undress uniform lounged on the ample divans. Whitman filled his pipe, I lighted a cigar, and with a sigh of temporary relief remarked that even life in Asia Minor has its compensations. Baidurt and the Kaimakam's house were a veritable oasis in our desert, and we enjoyed it to the top of our bent. What if the weather outside was villainous, cold, snowy, icy, dreary, were we not well housed, and what if we did have to get up in the morning for an early start? The man who borrows trouble from to-morrow is an idiot, and in that respect at least we were not idiots. We had a fine evening before us, and determined to make the most



of it. I went to work on my note-book, interrupting myself every now and then to whistle a snatch of some old song, or to make some hilarious reference to our good luck in not being compelled to spend the night in a stable. I don't know when I have been more exuberant than on that occasion, for I had been nearly starved to death, and now had the prospect of a good meal ; I had slept on a camp-bed not big enough for me with my furs for a coverlid—and they had a way in the coldest part of the night of slipping off on the floor—while now I should sleep on a mattress and sleep warm. Who would not be happy under such unusual circumstances?

I had a long talk during the evening with some of our visitors, and of course elbowed my way by slow degrees through the peculiarities of the country, physical and social, to the Armenian question. I began by telling them that the true buffalo is to be found in Anatolia, while in America we had, once on a time, large numbers of the bison variety—now no more, *requiescat in pace*—and then discoursed of the crops, the various races represented in the district, and so at last stood face to face with the Armenian. But I made little progress, for the Turks suddenly grew reticent. At last, just a bit nettled, I said frankly :

“You know, perhaps, that the purpose of my visit is to look into that matter, and that I do so not only with the consent and approval of the Sultan, but also at his request.”

At that they unbent slightly and talked in glittering generalities. The discussion was unsatisfactory, however. I had in mind some facts, but nearly all of my statements were stoutly but courteously denied. The Turks were quite ready to live on amicable terms with the Armenians, they said, but that had been found to be impossible. There had been, it was true, what the outside world, which had no knowledge of the subject, had called a massacre, but the Armenians had brought the trouble on themselves, and the story told of the numbers killed had been vastly exaggerated. I very soon discovered that it was utterly impossible to get any accurate information from Turkish sources and relapsed into silence—a silence, by the way, which they regarded as suspicious. So I inwardly determined to visit some representative Armenians, and remarking that I was rather worn with the day’s journey, bade them good-night, and retired to my room, where I puffed away at my bad cigar until I became drowsy, and then went to bed.

And next came Kop Dagh! "This is the critical point in our journey," said Sirry Bey, "and if we put it behind us we have nothing more to fear this side of Erzeroom." This Kop Dagh is a watershed, the rivers on the north flowing into the Black Sea, while those on the south run down to the Persian Gulf. It is very close upon eight thousand feet high, and its summit is more inhospitable than any other mountain-top in that region, excepting of course Mount Ararat, which towers seventeen thousand feet, and is a giant among giants. I had been dreading the ascent, for all sorts of stories were in circulation, many of them of incredible hardship and all of narrow escapes. We found our way by slow degrees and a steady climb to Kop Khan, which is at the foot of the last and most perilous ascent.

I have been in all sorts of Khans, have made the acquaintance of every living bug that tries to make life not worth the living, have been alternately frozen and roasted, but Kop Khan outdoes them all. The earthen floor was saturated with more filthy things than any American can think of, and the windows were hermetically sealed with oiled paper. There was a fire in the sheet-iron stove which drove the foul air up to the point of suffocation, and a



stovepipe that had several breaks in it, from one of which issued flames like a young volcano, while from another came such quantities of smoke that we could not see across the room. I several times rushed into the freezing cold outside to give my lungs a chance to work. A more wretched or despairing human being than I, was never seen. I cannot tell you how I was tormented by the thought of spending the night there. And yet there was nothing to do but to make the best of a horrid experience, so when Mr. Whitman, in order to cajole me into good temper told a funny story, I broke into a laugh that was hysterical and dismal.

We were to make an early start. We had changed from horses to sledges, and in the first gray dawn were to be on our way. We had less than two thousand feet to climb but they covered a road more rugged than anything we had hitherto experienced. There were several drifts which camel-drivers had reported and it would be impossible to get through them. So twenty men were sent ahead with shovels to dig a path.

What we feared was the sudden wind which waylays the traveller and blows the snow with such ferocity that, unless he is specially gifted

with the power of endurance it buries him out of sight. This wind generally rises at about noon, and we were, therefore, anxious to get over the last spur as much before twelve o'clock as possible.

That morning not a breath of air stirred, and we felt secure, or at least hopeful. But, oh, how cold it was! The chill went through a fur overcoat as through a linen duster, and the blood seemed to be freezing in our veins. Still, when the sun got up it would be warmer, and we were happy at the prospect of putting this enemy under our feet.

When I tell you that we were in sledges, you naturally say to yourself, "Ah, these gentlemen were travelling in fine style," and you imagine a thing of beauty, drawn by prancing steeds to the jingling music of sleigh-bells. Well, you were never more mistaken. "'T is true, 't is pity; and pity 't is, 't is true." They were antediluvian, even prehistoric vehicles, such as Noah would have constructed for his family if there had been a snow-storm on Ararat. There was neither shape to them, nor comfort in them. The seat was not more than eight inches wide, and it was covered with a cushion which had been left out over night in storm and rain, and was frozen solid. The runners were

saplings that had been bent and then shod with iron. The body was a rude box, nailed in such slovenly manner that the nail-heads protruded and tore our clothes at every opportunity. But were we not going through Armenia, and ought we not, therefore, to be satisfied? We did not dream of "downy beds of ease," but if we escaped being smothered, the storm playing the part of Othello while we submitted to fate in the *rôle* of Desdemona, we should be entirely satisfied.

"Look your wretched harness over," I said to the driver, through our dragoman, "and if you find a weak spot, mend it. There is a coil of good rope in the sledge, and where the leather gives out, use the manilla."

He gazed at me in a vacant sort of way, but made no reply. Why should he bother about harness, and why take precautions against possible accidents? Was he not a Turk, with a Turk's faith? If we were destined to go over the precipice, would a coil of rope prevent it? And if we were foreordained to get over Kop Dagh safely, we need n't fret, need we? In-shallah! He had never heard of Oliver Cromwell, and his practical maxim. "Trust in Providence, but keep your powder dry," was not consistent with Turkish philosophy.



What is to be, will be, and what is not to be, will not be—that is his whole creed, so he does n't care a penny whether the harness breaks or not.

Our dragoman looked on the matter in a different light.

“What is the prospect, Hermann?” I asked.

“Fair ; none too good, but pretty fair,” was the reply. “If the ramshackle sledge holds together, if the horses don't balk, if those traces don't give out——”

“Any more ‘ifs’?” I inquired.

Hermann is not an optimist, and he answered: “Those three ifs will do for the present, I imagine.”

“Are you ready, gentlemen?” sang out Sirry Bey.

“All ready,” was the reply, and so we were off.

We kept up a good pace for a couple of hours, and then found ourselves at the foot of the last spur. It was a gorgeous morning! The crisp snow crackled under the horses' hoofs and under the iron runners. The air was full of ozone, and the blood in our veins seemed to be heated by a subtle kind of electricity. So far everything was favorable, and

there was no omen of disaster in the sky. The sun shone gloriously, there were miles on miles of mountain tops, in every direction, white as burnished silver, but we were so high up that we had to look down on them. We were seated in the royal box of a huge amphitheatre, the audience made up of towering peaks. It was a most impressive and magnificent spectacle, in the presence of which it was impossible to cherish any thought of danger.

I wonder if you will know what I mean, if you will accuse me of exaggeration, when I say that the scene was so awfully grand that I was positively hypnotized by it, that the spirit of the universe seemed to have entered my soul, and to have expanded it to such extent that even the idea of dying under such circumstances appeared to be not only natural and proper, but even desirable. I have read of that ancient philosophy which teaches us that we are only sparks of the Eternal Flame, and that when what we call death occurs, these sparks are simply absorbed by the Flame, and that if we looked at matters rightly we should be glad to be thus absorbed, and should look forward to it as a great privilege. On that wonderful morning, the indigo sky above me, the assemblage of lesser mountains grouped

about me, the sun pouring himself in a flood of light on the path, I understood what that philosophy meant. Kop Dagh was a sort of highway to heaven, to the sun, the stars, and it would not be a mishap if we should step from its summit into the next world. This may have been a sort of ecstasy,—perhaps it was,—caused by the rare atmosphere at that height, but whatever it was, it was a rare experience, and one I shall never forget. Nature has never seemed so grand, so all-embracing, so loving, as on that wonderful morning, and I doubt if I can ever enjoy the same sensations again. Perhaps once in a lifetime is enough.

“What are those men doing, up yonder?” I asked.

“They are our twenty shovellers,” was the reply.

“Our road is blocked?” I inquired.

“There is a big drift across the path,” he answered, “but by the time we get there it will be cleared away.”

Our horses plunged into it with a will, but it was a tough job to pull the sledge through. The snow was above their knees, the runners sank to the very body of the sledge, and for a few minutes it looked as if we should be brought to a standstill. After a good deal of



hard work, however, the drift was left behind, and the poor beasts stood with panting sides, wild eyes, and extended nostrils.

“I can't stand this,” I cried. “I'm going to get out and walk a bit.”

“Don't you do it,” sang out Whitman, but he was too late, for I was already in the snow.

Then I appreciated what the horses had been doing, and did n't wonder that they were covered with foam. I struggled for ten rods through snow nearly up to my knees and then fairly gave out. I don't know that I have ever before been so exhausted. I could hardly catch my breath, I was half-asphyxiated, and my heart beat like a trip-hammer. Of course the altitude had produced these results, and I yelled to the driver to stop. When I reached the sledge I dropped into my seat like a log, and had a terrible quarter of an hour, wondering what had happened to my lungs.

A little farther on we were on the edge of a ravine and four of the shovellers clung to the sledge to keep it from slewing, and dumping us over as coal is dumped on the sidewalk when the cart is tipped. The horses were well shod and did not slip, but the sledge runners were smooth, and when at an angle of thirty degrees had a tendency to slide near enough

to the precipice to make us think of disagreeable possibilities.

There, directly in front of us, was the last ascent, almost as steep as the side of a house. Once over that, and we should be all right.

“Ten minutes’ rest,” came from the sledge ahead, and the poor, winded horses, were glad of it.

If a kindly fate would give us just half an hour more of still weather! But fate was not kindly. The mood of capricious Nature suddenly changed. There was an ominous movement of air which rather startled us, and in less time than it takes to tell it, half a gale was blowing. How the wind whistled! And the particles of icy snow beating against our faces like chopped crystal seemed to pierce the skin like so many needles. The horses grew restive. We drew up the collars of our coats and pulled our hats down over our eyes, but those needle-points were resistless. We were pelted until we were well-nigh blinded.

There was no turning back, of course. We should have broken the sledge into kindling-wood if we had made the attempt. The thing we dreaded most had come upon us, but we must push on to the top at all hazards. The outlook was rather dismal, but the driver

cheered his horses with caressing words, and with many a snort they kept on their way. At one moment, just as we turned a corner, and with only an eighth of a mile between us and safety, the horses stopped, not so much because they were worn out, as because the blinding ice particles which so filled the air that one could hardly see ten feet, bewildered them.

“Let them rest a minute,” I cried.

The driver knew his business. He said nothing, sat on his seat crossed-legged, like a graven image, and silent as the Sphinx.

Pretty soon I heard a sound like a chirrup. It was low, almost a whisper, but the horses heard it. They bent their heads, strained themselves to start the sledge and walked slowly and with great difficulty. If the harness had given out, we should have been buried, and why it did not give out, made up of shreds and patches as it was, is beyond my ken. But it held together and we reached the summit.

At that moment a man on horseback passing us cried out.

“Are you Englishmen?”

“I am an American,” I answered, “and who are you?”

“A nice position you find yourself in!” he said. “Kop Dagh is rather ugly to-day. How-



ever, you are all right now, and you may think yourselves lucky. I'm going the other way. I heard you were on the road and hoped to meet you. Perhaps I shall see you later on. What a wind! Good-by."

He was a missionary, on his way to the North to escort his bride to the interior. He bestrode a strong, stalwart beast, and was dressed in fur. I did meet him afterwards at the mission house of Mr. Chambers in Erzeroom. But it was odd, in the midst of that howling tempest, to hear a cheery voice bidding us welcome to the hospitality of Kop Dagh, and that voice an English one.

When we reached a point in the road not more than two hundred yards on the other side of the summit, we found ourselves under the lee of a large ledge of rocks. A dead calm prevailed there, and not a snowflake fell, while above our heads we could hear the roaring of the wind and see the snow-storm which was raging. The revulsion of feeling may be imagined, but it cannot be described. The hard task of the day was over, and we halted for awhile to allow our horses to pull themselves together before beginning the steep descent. Kop Dagh had apparently played a practical joke on us,—had done its level best for sixty

minutes to show us that it had the power, if it had also the will, to bury us out of sight. But we were safe, and our mutual congratulations were very hearty.

And the scenery! There is no use in trying to talk of it, for words can express so little. A thousand mountains lay at our feet. They were of varying sizes, like a father and mother and a large family of different ages, so covered with snow that neither shrub nor tree was to be seen. Down yonder, in the dizzy valley, rolled and screamed a vehement torrent making its way to the Black Sea, the last stream that flows north, for on the morrow the rivers would be seen to flow the other way.

At five o'clock we were at the foot of the mountain, but still on a plateau nearly five thousand feet from sea level, and in good time had a fair dinner and a quiet night's rest.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ERZERROOM.

“WHAT is that long black line on the horizon?” I asked.

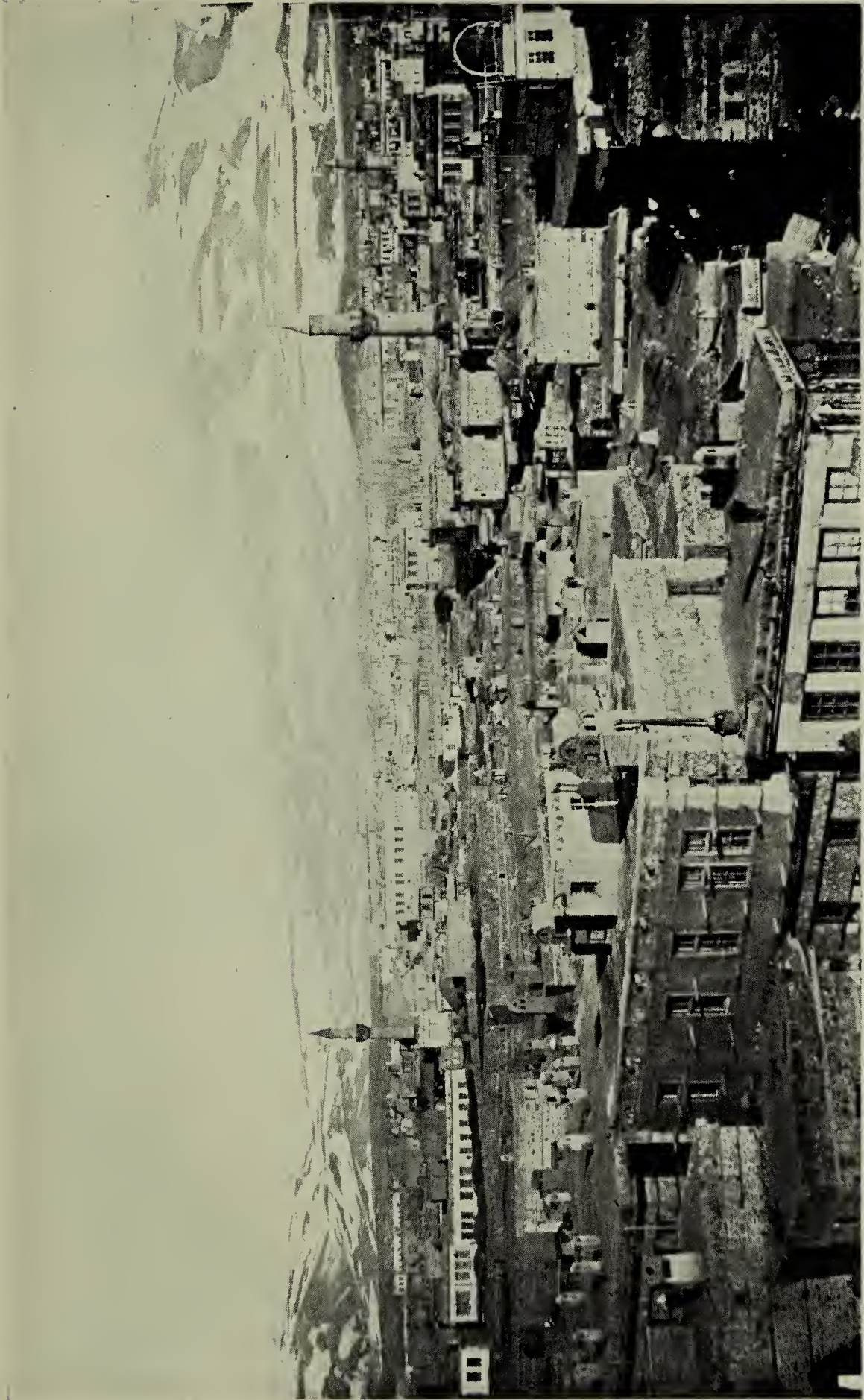
“Why, that is the city of Erzerroom,” was the reply.

There it was, the city we had been looking forward to for ten days, only eight days of actual travel, however, for we had been detained forty-eight hours at a Khan on account of the illness of one of the party.

Back of it, in front of it, and on both sides of it were mountains ; not baby mountains, but full-grown, stalwart fellows, and the city itself was at an elevation of more than six thousand feet. To say that we were rendered hilarious at having reached this point in our journey is but feebly to express our feelings. We had sent word ahead, and the Vali very kindly hired a house for our accommodation.

Erzerroom, from a distance, looks like a strip





ERZERUM.



of black velvet on a white sheet. It was close upon sundown when we passed through the gate of the large earthworks by which it is surrounded. Tired as we were we recalled the fact that the city is simply a fortress, that it was once a stronghold of the Byzantine Empire, and that it has been the centre of many a battle-field. It was one of the chief points which I longed to visit, for it is the capital of a large villayet, and has over forty thousand inhabitants, one quarter of which aggregate are Armenians. As it is on the caravan route from Bagdad to Trebizond, there are close upon two thousand resident Persians there, but for some reason or other, only a few Jews. It is so close to the Russian border that it is thought prudent to station within its limits a garrison of four or five full regiments of infantry, which fact keeps the air resonant with the echoes of the bugle-call and of the military band.

One branch of the Euphrates, called in Turkish the Kara Su, pours its muddy torrent through the plain not far away, and near its banks the Russians and the Turks have met in deadly array. We passed the scene of conflict, and by dint of rubbing up our memories, each one of the company adding a fact or two, got a pretty fair idea of the historic value of the place.



## 108 Through Armenia on Horseback

But it is cold in Erzeroom ; we found it so. Its altitude insures purity of air, and also its penetrating and freezing quality. The mercury at times drops to twenty degrees below zero, Fahrenheit, and the poor wretches who come over the mountain passes near by—Palantoken Dagh, for instance, or Deve-Boyan—must be on the lookout, or they may be overtaken by the dreaded Tipi, the outer edge of which we encountered on the top of Kop Dagh—a snow-storm combined with a vicious gale which benumbs the traveller and quickly changes him into an icicle.

When I saw the minarets piercing the sky, and the dome of the beautiful Armenian church, and the spire of the Catholic church, and the tall roof of the Greek church, I said to myself, “Yes, this will be an interesting place to spend a few days in. There is the distant past to be looked at through a glass dimly, the recent past with shot and shell, and the present with its struggles to recover from the massacres of yesterday.” In Erzeroom I was no longer on the outskirts of the Armenian question, but in its centre, and mingled emotions of pity and gladness, of grief and hopefulness chased each other through my soul.

By the time we had unpacked our panniers

and done what little we could to increase the comfort of our stay there, we received visits from the Vali, Rauff Pacha, and the English, French, and American Consuls. The visit of the Vali was returned the next day, and I found him a courteous gentleman and quite willing to discuss the matters in which I was most interested. He spoke French fluently, and so we dispensed with the intervention of our dragoman. I had no sooner sipped the hospitable cup of coffee and lighted the equally hospitable cigarette, than I found myself asking all sorts of questions concerning the Armenians. I will tell the story just as he told it to me, and afterwards perhaps make some comments on it. He sent for official documents and quoted from them, so the account he gave was the one which had been sent to the Palace.

That the scenes enacted in Erzeroom were too terrible to contemplate without the sternest criticism of the central government must be admitted. I do not know how many were killed, and no one will ever know, for nothing in Turkey is more illusive than figures. An immense amount of property was destroyed, and the looting went on for hours without interruption. At the end of it all, hundreds of families were beggared, and the number of

widows and orphans was beyond computation. These facts are not to be denied, and if the official reports do not verify the statement, so much the worse for the official reports. The imagination fails to realize that tragedy of demolition which began—so I was told by those who were calm observers—with a bugle-call, and ended in the same way. It is no more than fair to say that this is denied, stoutly denied by those in authority, but I have good reason to believe that it is true nevertheless.

I give special prominence to this story for two reasons. First, because it is the kind of story that is told by every Turkish official throughout Anatolia, and if we hope to arrive at an impartial judgment of the case, we ought to be willing to listen with equal patience to the evidence of both sides. Second, and more important, because it brings to the front the undisputed fact that there were revolutionists among the Armenians, that they were a reckless, dare-devil set of fellows, and that they should be held in part responsible for the events which have taken place. The story told by the Vali runs as follows :

An Armenian belonging to a secret society met another Armenian, a member of a rival society, in Erzeroom, and an altercation en-



sued, in which the second man was killed. The murderer fled, but was captured after a week's hunt and on his person an implicating and important paper was found. It looked like a commercial letter; indeed, the first page was on a purely mercantile subject, a commercial letter, all the other pages being apparently blank. Suspicion was aroused, a well-known chemical was applied, and handwriting was developed. I have seen the original in Armenian, I have a certified translation in French, and from that I take my facts. It is headed, "General Session of the Armenian Revolution Committee," and then follows a record of the proceedings. The meeting was held in London on "the 26 October 1896" and there were other meetings, twenty-two in all, which continued until "Jany. 13, 1897."

The names of the delegates present were given, but they are not necessary here. At the beginning of the session one member "eulogized the dead agitators during the recent occurrences at Constantinople and Van and the mountain in the vicinity of Van." The Council "recorded its sincere admiration for Garo, Rotsi, Leon, and their companions who conducted themselves in heroic fashion and made the sacrifice of their lives."

The first question considered was "Preliminary Preparations in Time of Peace." One member declared that the Armenians had made *des sacrifices enormes* and that their present situation "did not permit them to continue the revolution." He advocated letting all agitation rest "for ten years" in order to recover themselves. This man seems to have been the Girondist of the occasion; but the Jacobins were in the majority. The Council rejected the proposition and "decided to continue the agitation in the future as in the past," declaring that it was necessary "to send arms and munitions of war" and to excite agitation, for the reason that if a period of tranquillity continued for ten years "the sympathy of European nations would not retain its intensity." The "unique object" of the revolutionists was "to produce a continuous agitation and to force the Great Powers" to settle the Eastern Question.

Another proposition was "to let the matter rest in Anatolia" and send the band of revolutionists "into Bulgaria and Servia," but this also was rejected. It was necessary that "the population, that is, the Armenians, should show their discontent, and in that way produce embarrassment in the country." By such means,

“ Europe would be forced to solve the Armenian question at the earliest possible moment.” Then is added this declaration, which I believe every observer will admit to be true : “ As long as the present state of things continues,” that is to say, the lack of reforms, “ the revolution cannot cease ” ; but it is also true beyond a doubt that the reforms which are demanded by the Armenians are in an almost equal degree needed by the Turks themselves. One of the difficulties of this problem is that Europe has demanded reforms for one class of the Sultan’s subjects and seems not to care a rush how the rest of the population may suffer. This discrimination seems so invidious to the the thoughtful Turk, that when speaking of it he becomes exasperated. “ Europe ” he says disdainfully, “ has great affection for some of us, but has n’t a word to say for others. What a queer position for statesmen to take ! Five hundred thousand of the great aggregate have the sympathy of Europe, but the other millions may go to the devil for ought it cares.”

The document continues : “ As to arresting the revolutionary movement, it is not to be thought of. This would be tantamount to condemning the nation whose fate, whose future, and whose happiness are in our hands.”



Then is added this significant sentence: "In consequence of these facts, the Council has unanimously voted the continuance of the revolution in the country districts and also in Constantinople." I quote again: "The question of the continuation of the revolution having been decided," it was voted "to form a number of small bands who shall operate in the country and thus cause embarrassment to the government. These bands shall murder [executeront] the Musselman population, shall occupy mountains and highroads, and attack post carriers and travellers, and so provoke disorder."

"Herein," said the Vali, "you will find the sole cause of the trouble in this city. The Armenian began it, the Turk ended it. There was hot rebellion here, and it was the business of the government to put it down at any cost, which it at once proceeded to do.

So much for the one side. Now for the other. When I spoke of these facts to a gentleman, whose name need not be mentioned, the reply was prompt.

"If Rauff Pacha tells you that story, he believes it to be true. He is a thoroughly honest man, and would not stoop to deception. I know him intimately, and will say frankly that he is one of the most honorable officials in

Asia Minor. In this matter, however, I am sure that he is mistaken. The responsibility for the massacre does not rest with the Armenians but with the government. What you state may have been the excuse for the massacres, but certainly not their cause. The city was not in danger, and there was no revolutionary movement on foot. The Armenians were not members of any secret society. If you wish to be perfectly fair in your judgment of the situation you must seek elsewhere for the real cause of these troubles."

"I am told," I said, "that a soldier was shot by an Armenian in the courtyard of the government building, and that the populace at once became frantic, that all sorts of rumors were afloat, and the massacre followed as a logical consequence."

"Yes," was the reply, "I have heard that on several occasions."

"Well, were you in a position to get at the facts?"

"I think so."

"Do you believe that the trouble originated in that way?"

"I do not."

"Tell me, then, what, in your opinion was the origin of the affair."

“We are near the Russian border,” he replied, “and that accounts for a good deal. If these Armenians were located in the South, on the shore of the Mediterranean for example, there would be no dread of anything they might do. They are, however, close to an enemy’s country. They are restless. They would like to form themselves into an independent state, a sort of Bulgaria. Under the circumstances it is a stupid ambition, because it can never be realized, but still the ambition exists to a greater or less extent. Turkey knows it, and is suspicious. Russia knows it, and laughs in her sleeve, because Armenians are playing into Russia’s hands. If the Armenians could be so crippled as to be powerless, why, don’t you see that the Turkish situation would be improved?”

“But,” I persisted, “why does not Turkey pursue a policy of conciliation rather than one of exasperation?”

“You must ask a wiser man than I am,” he replied.

“The Armenians do not like Russia?” I asked.

“They hate it.”

“They are not as free there as here?”

“By no means. Besides, why should not



a man be permitted to live in his native land? Those who fled in fear, are slowly coming back."

"Would it be possible to conciliate the Armenians?"

"Certainly; why not? They are a peace-loving people, a race of traders, and if security of life and property were insured, they would be the best of subjects, and the most loyal."

"You think so?"

"I know so."

This conversation seemed to me rather important. You can put it side by side with the statements previously made, and then you will have about all the evidence there is. It is contradictory, to be sure, but that is inevitable.

May I be permitted at this point to refer to some personal experiences in this quaint old city, by quoting from a letter written on the spot?

"We are being detained in Erzeroom for a few days on account of the illness of one of our party. I don't wonder at this, for a cast-iron stomach is necessary to digest the daily food of the Turk. He delights in gravies, and eats sweetmeats and rich crusts with a tremendous appetite. I am thoroughly tired of

the *menu*, and long, with an inexpressible longing for the simple cooking of home, a juicy joint, a rare beefsteak, which in this country the people know nothing about. I sometimes dream that I am sitting at an American table, enjoying the plain food to which I am accustomed, and when I wake up, it is with a sigh that comes from the depths of my inner consciousness.

“We shall probably be here for some little time, and I chafe at the prospect. Bitlis is on the other side of the pass ahead of us, only five days off, but it might as well be in the moon since we can't get there. The roads are blocked with snow, and that partly reconciles us to our detention, but when the pack-horses and camels have trodden a safe path we shall be in anything but an amiable mood if we are detained much longer.

“I have roamed about this city for the last few days, visiting all the places of interest, and have a few hours of leisure in which to relate what I have seen. Erzeroom is as nearly Oriental in its outward appearance and in the habits and customs of the people as it can be in a climate which sends the mercury up to one hundred degrees in summer, and down to fifteen or twenty degrees below zero in winter.

It is thoroughly Oriental in the fact that it has no drainage, and that it is subject to earthquakes and pestilences. That its history runs back to the years before the Christian era, and that it has ever since been the commercial *entrepôt* between Bagdad and the markets of Europe gives it a kind of redolent importance to the tourist. And, oddly enough, you find in the streets of Erzeroom to-day caravans of camels laden with costly merchandise, just as the visitor has seen them for the last two thousand years. They make a quaint picture as they stop at a trough to drink, and fill the air with their cries which seem half-human and half-unearthly. The driver is generally a Persian, a man much more dirty than dirt itself, a swarthy fellow with black eyes and hair, and shoes which look like canal-boats. He is a mass of patched rags which have done service for several generations. His overcoat is worth looking at. A stick about three feet long, rests on his shoulders, and from this is suspended the skin of some animal or a piece of thick felt which reaches nearly to his heels. This is his protection from the winter cold and storm. He has little or nothing to say, but the camels know his voice and obey him implicitly. At the word of command, when they



have reached a Khan for the night, they drop first on their knees with a grunt of profound satisfaction, and then their hind legs give way, very much as Holmes's 'one hoss shay' did, and with another grunt they collapse into a position of repose for the night.

"In the streets, which are so narrow that two vehicles can only pass each other with difficulty, there is no such thing as sanitation. An open gutter is the most advanced 'modern improvement' that I have seen, and even that is met with in only one or two thoroughfares. The people use the street in front of their dwellings as a receptacle for all conceivable household refuse, and where there is any pavement at all it is so covered with the accumulation that it has long since ceased to be visible. As a consequence, there are epidemics of smallpox and typhus, which assume very virulent forms. In summer the place is utterly unendurable. The odors are maddening as well as threatening, and those who have the means fly with their tents to the magnificent mountains, within three hours' drive, and camp out for a couple of months. If they are fond of sport, there are numerous trout-streams and plenty of trout in them which readily take the fly. If they care for a gun, there may be seen

a wild hog, the brown bear, the boar, the chamois, the red deer, the fox, and the wolf. The native has no taste for this sort of thing, and the stranger, therefore, has full swing.

“Of course the mortality in the city is something dreadful to contemplate. The people, however, seem to enjoy themselves in their own Oriental fashion. There are few physicians, and everyone takes his chances. It is not uncommon for a man to have had a round dozen children, but it would be a remarkable circumstance if he had not lost from six to ten of them. With these facts staring them in the face, they are utterly indifferent to any regulations which would introduce a healthier condition of affairs. In America we should have a popular uprising, but the Oriental sighs and whispers ‘Inshallah,’ and there the matter ends.

“I have told you something about the Armenian school, or gymnasium. It has four professors, and the curriculum is as wide as it need be. Boys are prepared for mechanical occupations, or are taught the higher branches to fit them for any position where superior intelligence is required.

“I have also had a long talk with our American missionaries. They live in one of the dirtiest parts of the city, where the filth is little less

than ankle-deep, but they are doing a wonderful work. Of course they attempt nothing in the way of conversion. There is on their part no desire to interfere with the followers of Mohammed, their task being confined to improving the moral and spiritual condition of the Armenians. They are practically engaged in a mission to foreign Christians, but that they are of use in this direction cannot be denied. Especially are they needed at the present juncture, when poverty reigns supreme among the victim classes. There are nearly two hundred children in the boys' and girls' school, a large majority of whom were made orphans by the recent disasters, and are wholly dependent on the missionaries for their support as well as their education.

“There are pretty hard times in Erzeroom just now, and there are circumstances of peculiar exasperation. For instance, as I am told, an Armenian woman was in one of the public baths recently and saw a Turkish woman wearing her personal ornaments. In the general plunder they had been taken from her house and appropriated by the victor. You may say what you please in extenuation of the massacres, but a people, nine-tenths of whom have neither harbored revolutionary sentiments





MISSIONARY'S HOUSE IN ERZEROOM.



nor revolutionists, who have worked for years to acquire a slender property and are robbed of it in a general panic, may be excused if they do not cherish the government which has unleashed the dogs of war. You see that although the Turks have had a vast deal of provocation, as I shall show you from time to time, it is simply preposterous to imagine that the Armenians have not had their serious grievances, which they have borne with much more patience than we should have exhibited under like circumstances.

“As you leave your house for a stroll, you see on the other side of the street, squatted on a carpet, his legs crossed, a queer-looking man with engraving and also writing materials in front of him. He is one of the necessities of the social life of the East. If you want a seal made, he will engrave you one in a couple of hours. In this country you put your signature to a document by rubbing a seal which has your name on it, with India ink and therewith stamping the paper. Even a public official does this. Or if you want a letter written, this man is quite at your service. You tell him what you want to say, then he places a sheet of paper on the palm of his hand—everybody in Turkey uses the palm of his hand for a writing-



desk, by the way—and with a *calamus*, which is a pointed stick split at the fine end, records your message. The correspondence of the illiterate, which is a very large class, is carried on in this way. It reminds me that I am not in a new world, but in a very old one, which knows nothing of our modern ways.

“How shall I describe the stores, or shops, of Erzeroom? Take away the front wall of the lower story and leave the room open to storm and wind, and you have the majority of them. The proprietor reclines or sits on a mat in the midst of his goods, completely covered with a huge blanket, and waits patiently for customers. If they come, he exhibits a mild indifference as to whether they purchase anything or not, and gives one the impression that it is hard luck to make him throw his warm wrap aside just to show you what you want to buy. He can live on next to nothing, his rent is merely nominal, he has, unless he is Armenian or Greek, no desire to work, and is quite satisfied if you remark that you are merely looking about and have no idea of spending any money. If no customers come, he sends for a glass of tea, which he deliberately sips, or lights a cigarette, and enjoys himself while chatting with the shopkeeper next door, prob-

ably about your personal appearance and your business in that part of the world. The tailoring, the shoemaking, even the blacksmithing, are all done out of doors in this way.

“Or, you notice a window with every pane but one carefully covered with oiled paper to keep out every breath of air. Here is another kind of shopkeeper. As you pass, he opens this single pane and holds in his hand a silver bracelet, or girdle,—articles which are a specialty in Erzeroom,—or perhaps several old coins, or it may be a cigarette-holder of black amber, for which the city is also famous. Step into the shop for a chat; you may be well repaid. You don't see what he has for sale, and he does not feel inclined to show you. Take your seat on a low stool and talk about the weather; then gradually come to the subject in hand. Show no curiosity, or he may try to get rid of you. If you lead him on, however, through your dragoman, you may rouse his interest, and he will, after a little while, open the drawers in two or three chests, about eighteen inches square each, and show you a great many things that will surprise you—a fine bit of old silverware, a black amber rosary, a bracelet, or what not.

“By the way, the Turk uses the rosary con-

stantly, or what resembles a rosary. He simply likes to have it in his hand to while away the time, and he will sit still and fumble the beads by the hour. Well, you see something you want. The moment he detects your interest he doubles his price. He asks four *mejidiehs* for the article. You assume a disdainful look and put the thing aside, casually remarking that you will give him two instead of four *mejidiehs* for it. He protests that you are trying to ruin him, but you begin to talk of something else. At length you rise to go, and after you have closed the door behind you, not before, or perhaps when you are fifty feet away, he calls you back, telling you that two *mejidiehs* are too little, but all the same you can have the article.

“If you grub about you will find a great many pleasant souvenirs in out-of-the-way places, but you must find them for yourself. No one will take the trouble to tell you about them: old swords, Damascus blades, hidden away in a heap of mere trumpery. Take down from a shelf a box with a peck of curious articles, and among them will be one or two that are quite worth attention.

“There is a fine Mohammedan school also in Erzeroum, and one mosque, especially, which is





DEALERS IN ROSARIES.



old and interesting. Moreover, there are some bits of wall which carry us back to the days of Alexander the Great or the Romans of the time of Christ. But the most impressive things, after all, are the inconceivable filth everywhere present, and the semi-barbaric life of the people, so far removed from our century that one grows dizzy at the thought.

“We have been reasonably comfortable here, but oh, so glad to turn our faces westward, which we shall do, Inshallah, in the course of a very few days.”



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE MASSACRES.

THE Turk always becomes either nervous or reticent, as I have already remarked, when you broach the subject of the massacres, and at once tries to change the conversation. He knows that they constitute a national disgrace, that the civilized world regards him with contempt, that he has been guilty of deeds which are equally infamous and cowardly, and that the position he pretends to assume regarding them is utterly indefensible. I have talked with Valis, with Kaimakams, with military officers, with priests, and with small tradesmen, and have found everywhere the same reluctance.

The topic is an extremely painful one, especially to a man who has wandered through districts where scores of villages have been destroyed, and where the very mountain torrents seem to shriek out their horror of the

scenes they have witnessed. Even the sunshine was robbed of its brightness and the clouds looked mournful when we saw the victims of this persecution and heard their pitiful story of poverty and hopeless bereavement. It is one thing to read about the tragedy, the stupid, blundering tragedy, when you are seated in your easy-chair thousands of miles away, but a very different thing to look into the wan and wrinkled faces of women whose homes have been broken up, and who were compelled to fly to the mountains amid the snows of winter, in order to save themselves and their children, while their husbands and fathers lay dead under the deserted roof.

I don't think I shall ever forget an experience we had as we approached the town of Delibaba on our way to Bitlis. It was a bitterly cold day, but at a point which we must needs pass, stood six forlorn women clothed in rags. As we came near, they lifted up their hands imploring us to stop. The appeal was too pathetic to be disregarded, and when we came to a standstill they kissed our hands and even the rugs which protected us from the blast. They begged for some bit of writing that might enable their husbands to return to their families. When the massacre was on,

their men folks had fled beyond the Russian border, and were still there. No word had come from them; there was nothing in the house to eat, and the plunderers had stolen all their cattle—their only capital—representing their hard-earned savings. The spring would soon be at hand, but who was to plough their few acres and sow their crops? It was a touching spectacle, one of many which I have witnessed, and do what I would, I could not keep back the tears. We gave them money, told them that an amnesty had been proclaimed and that their husbands might return without fear of further danger, and then drove on. My day was spoiled, however, and the beauties of the defile which we entered were lost on me. I could see nothing but those six faces, could think of nothing but the wretchedness into which that part of Anatolia has been plunged. Mr. Whitman did what he could to cheer me up, but the incident haunted me until I fell asleep that night.

Why did the Turks commit acts so unprofitable to themselves? No satisfactory answer has yet been given to that question. It will remain more or less a mystery. I remember that during our Civil War, when I was on the staff of General Banks in Louisiana, I was de-



tailed to look after the interests of the colored people south of New Orleans. On one occasion I entered the house of a rich planter who had three hundred people at work, and asked for a night's lodging and some supper. He was an old fellow, close upon seventy, and a secessionist of the most rabid kind. It was for his interest to receive me, but his cordiality was like the heat in an icicle. During the evening, under the soothing influence of a good cigar, he thawed out and talked rather freely about the divine institution of slavery. When I casually referred to the matter of corporal punishment, he grew almost eloquent, and assured me that it was never allowed on his plantation, that his slaves were like members of his own family. They were well fed, well clothed, and well housed. "Corporal punishment!" he broke out, rising from his chair and assuming the attitude of an orator. "Corporal punishment would not only hurt my feelings, but injure my property. There is a logic in that fact which you people of the North do not understand. Suppose I have a slave, an able-bodied boy worth fifteen hundred dollars, a bright-eyed, clean-limbed darkey. He is a part of my capital in trade, he is a financial investment. Now tell me, am I likely to do

anything which will lower his market price? If I have him whipped, I may take away his spirit and make him sullen. Or worse than that, the lash of my overseer may injure him physically. Do you think I am going to reduce his value by two or three hundred dollars with a cat-o'-nine-tails?"

The argument seemed to me to be conclusive, in spite of the fact that I had been saturated with abolition doctrines from my youth up. I was under thirty, and wondered if my father and mother were all wrong. The next morning, I bade the old wretch a kindly good-bye, leaped into the saddle, and was off. Before I reached the gate I heard a cry, a pitiful cry. In another half-minute it was repeated. I turned back and soon reached the door of an outhouse from behind which the cry came. I was robust in those days and something of a dare-devil. I made a rush for the door, hit it with my whole weight, and it gave way. Then I saw a spectacle which even after this lapse of time is painfully vivid. A stalwart boy, stripped to the waist, was tied by the thumbs to a post overhead, and the overseer was cutting his flesh with a long lash until the blood flowed.

What I did under the circumstances is of no

consequence. I only want to say that the old planter had lied to me ; that a man will reduce the value of his property even when it is against his interest to do so, and that the logic to which I listened the night before proved itself to be inconclusive.

Now, if you can tell me why that planter was willing to sacrifice three hundred dollars, or to run the risk of sacrificing that sum for the pleasure of whipping his slave, I will tell you why the Turks have engaged in a wholesale massacre of the Armenians. It is one of those mysteries which have their root in the depravity of human nature, and that is as near to a solution of the problem as anyone can get.

Of course, there were causes which led up to the massacres, and made them possible. If the Turks had been on friendly terms with the Armenians, had not been suspicious of them, and had not envied their prosperity, there would have been no murders. But in very truth, the two races exasperate each other, not because of religious differences but because of their personal characteristics. The only wonder to me is that they have got along together as well as they have done. Why the Armenians do not emigrate to some spot on the



globe where their environment would be less dangerous, is a puzzle that I cannot guess.

When I wandered through Switzerland some years ago and saw that an avalanche had swept away half a village on the mountain-side, and that the survivors were rebuilding on the same site, I asked a like question: "Why do they rebuild when they know perfectly well that another avalanche may already be loosening its hold to duplicate the destruction of the past?" I confess I do not know. Whether it is that men prefer danger to safety, or whether they convince themselves that a disaster of that kind will never occur again, is beyond my ken. There they are, however, and there they will stay with the chances all against them.

There are only five thousand Armenians in America to hundreds of thousands of all other nationalities, and yet there is room enough for the whole population of Armenia. There is hardly a spot in Europe where they would not be entirely safe, and have ample opportunity to ply their trades, but they choose to remain in a land which has been conquered by the Turk, and under a government which hates them, which oppresses them by unjust laws, which imprisons them, tortures them, and in an hour of desperation murders them.

Let me tell you why, in my judgment, there will always be friction between the Turks—and that word must include the Kurds—and the Armenians. So far as the ability to protect himself is concerned, the Armenian belongs to a degenerate race. Time was when he had military prowess, and when a wholesome fear restrained his enemies from making an attack. He had the prestige which belongs to a warrior people. He not only knew how to fight, but how to conquer. He had a kingdom, and a race of sovereigns of whom he had a right to be proud; strongholds or castles in impregnable positions; swords which he had himself forged, and brave hearts and strong to wield them. His history goes back to a period just this side of the Ark and of Ararat, which lifted its hoary head within sight of his home. Even the Roman Emperor, Pompey, thought it no mean task to defeat the Armenians in a pitched battle, and no slight honor to have an Armenian queen in his triumphal procession.

There was heroism in those days, but since that time the Armenian has lost all his skill and all his courage. He has been conquered and reconquered, bruised, broken, crushed between the upper and lower millstones of adverse fate. He may be proud of his an-

cestors, but they can scarcely be proud of him.

Let me tell you about our cook, Migirditch, in order to illustrate this statement. From Trebizond to Erzeroom and during our stay in the latter city we lived on food cooked after the Turkish manner. It soon became evident, however, that neither Mr. Whitman nor I could stand it. It was so differently prepared from what we had been accustomed to that our digestive organs rebelled and threatened to make havoc. The Turk delights in dishes which I abominate. He cannot make a dinner without a quantity of sweets, generally honey. He brings his fried eggs on the table in a sea of melted grease, and his pillaf is rice boiled in mutton-fat. Then, too, he disdains the use of knives, and pulls the turkey apart with his fingers. If there is soup, the tureen is placed in the middle and each one, armed with a spoon, helps himself. After six people have dipped six spoons for the sixth time into the tureen, my appetite fails me, and I want no more dinner. One can starve very comfortably for a while, but when he is riding ten hours a day over rough roads he feels the need of nourishing food and plenty of it. So when I find myself growing thinner day by





AN EATING-HOUSE.



day, and my vitality getting down to a pretty low ebb, I think I may be excused if I insist on a reform in the culinary department.

This we made very successfully, and after some delay engaged an Armenian cook, who proved very skilful. Now Migirditch was being paid just four times as much as he had been receiving, but he couldn't help making extra demands. With the shrewdness of his race he would n't let an opportunity to get more slip by unused. Then I became wroth and used plain language in defining my position. He was soundly berated, metaphorically of course, but he made no reply, accepting our execrations with a resignation that was appalling. A Kurd would have had his dagger out and applied it to its proper use, but Migirditch was as dumb as the grave, and it seemed not to enter his head that he had any rights in the case, or that it would do the least good to defend his actions. He was so cowed that it was pitiful; cowed by my simple, though somewhat emphatic, fault-finding, and he went back to his pots and pans without a murmur, a veritable non-resistant, not on principle, but by inheritance.

Naturally gifted, however, the broken-down Armenian of earlier days turned his talents in



a different direction. He became a trader, a money-maker, and after a few generations was the shrewdest man at a bargain on the planet. It is said that a Jew can cheat the world, that a Greek is sharper than two Jews, and that an Armenian is more than a match for two Greeks. The instinct of trade is abnormally developed and you must be careful when you do business with him. Of course, all this is a generalization. I am talking about racial characteristics. There are Armenians, and it has been my privilege to meet some of them, whose integrity is beyond reproach, and whose honor is as sensitive as that of the noblest merchant in Europe.

The Armenian has been remarkably successful in making money because he is endowed with an unusual amount of brains. If you meet on your way a long line of pack-horses carrying goods to market, the chances are ten to one that both the owner of the goods and of the pack-horses belong to the Armenians, while the drivers are pretty sure to be Turks. If you go on a shooting expedition, and want either a guide or a man to look after your horses, you will take a Turk, for he loves the horse and knows every inch of the country. But if you want any skilled work done, no

matter of what kind, you will always find that the man to do it is a Greek or an Armenian. When we were in Baiburt, I saw a beautiful dagger in an exquisite scabbard. A Turk owned it, and was proud of it; but no Turk could make it. I said: "That is the work of a Greek," and he was indignant, but on questioning him I found that I had guessed the truth. If you put an Armenian and a Turk side by side in a village, it will hardly be twelve months before the Turk will retire impoverished because the Armenian has absorbed the business. The Turk has conquered the Armenian by force of arms, but the Armenian has the better of the Turk by force of brains. Up to the time of the recent massacres the Turk was continually losing money, while the Armenian grew richer every day.

The main difficulty with the Turk is that he is a magnificent horseman and a good soldier, but nothing else. If you keep him on horseback, your admiration knows no bounds, for he is royally the master of the situation. But the minute he leaves the saddle he is helpless. Put him behind earthworks, and he will stay there until the crack of doom. He knows how to die on the field, but he does not know how to live anywhere else. I have seen him ride

over rough country at a breakneck speed which made my eyes start from their sockets. He may fall from the horse, or they may both fall—the horse and rider all tangled up—but he gathers himself together in a twinkling, and with a laugh, takes to the saddle again and is off. Sit by his side, however, and talk about some practical concern, and he is little better than a child of ten years, for his notions of business are dreamy, illogical, and illusory.

Moreover, he is a hospitable and a generous creature. There is a *laissez-faire* about him and a reposeful carelessness, like one who is drifting on the current and has no curiosity whatever as to where he is going, which are delightful if you have nothing for him to do, and to the last degree exasperating if you are in any way dependent on him. When we had reached a certain village not far from Bitlis, one night, a Turkish colonel came to visit us. After we had sipped the coffee and lighted our cigarettes, Mr. Whitman, who is a *connoisseur* in such matters, noticed that the dagger which the colonel wore was an unusually fine one, and politely asked permission to examine it. It was at once taken off, and we admired it immensely, for the sheath, as well as the fine Damascus blade, were profusely ornamented



with silver work. As Mr. Whitman handed it back, the colonel said, with great heartiness, "Keep it, I beg you, as a souvenir of your visit." That, of course, was impossible, and the refusal was couched in such courteous language that the colonel took the dagger back, but expressed many regrets that he must needs do so. Now I am not quite sure that he would not have been sorry to part with that beautiful weapon, and rather think that Mr. Whitman's refusal was a delight as well as a surprise; but the incident shows the generous impulse which characterizes all classes. The Anatolian Turk will go considerably out of his way to serve you, and seldom takes any recompense therefor.

Let me give another illustration. When we left Erzeroom, Rauff Pacha, the Vali, detailed one of his cavalry sergeants to keep a sharp lookout for the two *Herald* representatives. He rode by my side all the way, and, so far as I could discover, never missed warning me of a bad place in the road. If we had to ford a stream, he first crossed himself and then recrossed to assure me that there was nothing to fear, and to insist that I should take his horse, which was a couple of hands taller than the ordinary and could therefore wade in deeper wa-

ter. He was the last man to say "good-night," and the first man to say "good-morning." We dubbed him "Hawk-eye," because of his constant vigilance. When we parted with him we offered him a handsome gift in gold, more money probably than he had seen in many a long day. But he drew back as if something had stung him, and refused the gift with something like passion. On no account would he touch our money, he said. He had been ordered by the Vali to see that we arrived safely at our destination, and if we would give him a letter saying that he had done his duty he would be exceedingly grateful. We urged him to accept the present, saying that it was not in payment for his services, simply a token of our good-will; but our words produced no effect, and he backed out of the room like one who has been frightened.

Every traveller in Anatolia has stories of the same kind to relate, and I am glad to pay the Turk this tribute, for it is his due.

But there is another side to his character, and if you study that other side, you learn the reason why the Turk is just where he is—so far in the background that he is not visible in the picture of our modern civilization. He has no administrative or executive ability what-

ever. I know there are grand exceptions, but the general rule holds good. The departments of government in Turkey are, even to-day, in spite of the massacres, in the hands of men who are not Mohammedans. The finances of the Empire are administered by Armenians and a few Greeks. If public funds are to be invested, the transaction is not given in charge of a Turk, for he knows nothing about finance. Look over the civil list in Constantinople, and you will be surprised to find names which have no Turkish termination. It may be a bold thing to say, and yet I venture the assertion that Turkey would fall into endless embarrassment and confusion were it not for those servitors who have Armenian blood in their veins, and who look after things with Armenian shrewdness.

The Sultan has tried to change all this, and one of his highest hopes is to render himself independent of this un-Mohammedan aid, and to put only pure Turks into office. A large number of the Armenians have been dismissed during the last two years, but the experiment has had doubtful results. The facts are kept as nearly *sub rosa* as possible, but many of the most important positions are still occupied by Armenians.



Is a railroad to be built?—the contract is taken by a foreigner, and the Turk steps to the rear. Frenchmen and Germans come to the front, and pocket all the profits of the enterprise. Are naval vessels to be acquired?—the Golden Horn is lined with rotten and rotting hulks. There is not a business house in Turkey that can repair them, and fit them for active service. The Turkish war-vessels are the most pitiful sight on the globe. They cost vast sums of money, and the poor Turk has been bled until he has become disheartened; but his battle-ships are not worth their weight as old junk. The great Ottoman Bank is in the hands of foreign capitalists, and even the Turkish army must needs be drilled by German officers. The troops went forth to do battle with the Greeks, carrying with them cannon made by Krupp, and Mauser and Winchester rifles. Turkey has no power to meet its own needs, but for years has simply been an orange sucked by men of brains from other nations. It is so utterly helpless that if you were to withdraw the foreign element, that is, the non-Mohammedan element, Turkey could not hold together for a decade. The Turk recognizes this fact, and is chagrined and in despair.

I have drawn this contrast between the Turk and the Armenian for a purpose, and the long details into which I have entered are necessary to that purpose. I am not ready to say that you can find therein the full cause of the massacres, but I think it is evident that they slowly led up to a condition of affairs that made massacre possible if not even probable. The Armenian has been getting into his own hands a controlling interest in the trade of Eastern and Central Anatolia. The Turk had not the ability to compete with him, and was a constant loser, much to his disappointment and indignation. He has had a grudge against his successful rival for many years, but was powerless to avenge himself. If he went into court, the judges could be easily bribed, and while he had no money to purchase a decision, the thrifty Armenian had plenty. The Armenians acquired more and more influence, and were to a certain extent backed in their demands by the Great Powers of Europe. The Turk had sense enough to see that he was gradually coming to be of no account even in his own country; that his property—through his own thriftlessness, to be sure, and that made him still more exasperated—was gradually diminishing, and he was in a very unhappy frame of mind. A class of men

who did not profess his religion, and who were loyal to the government for revenue only, were silently and steadily getting the better of him. Where would it all end, and by what means could he recover his lost prestige?

How could these two nations, so different in temperament, and in their way of looking at life, get on comfortably together? How would it be possible to avoid friction? If you tell me that before the massacres they did live in amity, my answer is that this is only partly true. Human nature is human nature, and never yet did a man who has traded himself into a fortune either at the real or supposed expense of another, live in wholly amicable relations with that other. This may be the case in the millennium, but not till then. This feeling of enmity between the Turk and the Armenian has been fermenting for a long while, and it only needed a proper occasion to give itself vent. Long before any massacres were dreamed of it was plain to me that the two races were like flint and powder, and during my travels in Armenia I have been more and more deeply convinced that the future of the Armenians is extremely clouded. It may be that the hand of the Turk will be held back through fear of Europe, but I am sure that the



object of the Turk is extermination, and that he will pursue that end if the opportunity offers. He has already come very near to its accomplishment, for the Armenians of to-day are an impoverished people, hopeless and in despair.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### ANOTHER VIEW OF THE MASSACRES.

NOW let us look at this matter from a different standpoint, namely: the work that has been done by the revolutionists.

Before I left Constantinople, the Sultan assured me through Mr. Whitman that the real cause of the trouble would not be found in religion but in politics. I had grave doubts on the subject, and not even the positive statement of a Sultan had any weight. He had been told very frankly by Mr. Bennett that I was not only an American, but also a clergyman, and I rather imagine that the combination—republicanism and theology—was somewhat distasteful to His Majesty. I could not have been, under the circumstances, *à persona grata*, and was not surprised that he had serious suspicions that I had already prejudged the case, and that I might end the journey with a wholesale arraignment of the Turk. This

suspicion was greatly emphasized when Mr. Bennett added that I certainly did sympathize with the Armenians, though he remarked that in spite of that fact I was capable of telling the truth as I saw it. The Sultan was in a measure pacified by this assurance, and even said that he cared nothing for my sympathies or my prejudices if only I was a man to investigate impartially, and bold enough to state my conclusions whether they accorded with the prevailing view of the subject in Europe or not. In that case he would be glad to have me go to Anatolia and would afford me every possible opportunity for investigation.

He enjoined upon me, however, to give special attention to the religious aspect of the massacres, declaring in very emphatic words that there was unrestricted religious liberty throughout the Empire, and that recent events had no relation to Mohammedism or Christianity—in a word, that religion was not a factor in the grave problem.

And it is but fair to say that in my judgment the Sultan was in the right. I have found it necessary, on many occasions, to take open issue with high Turkish officials when discussing other phases of the question, but in this one respect I soon found myself in almost



entire agreement with them. In very truth, it was a surprise to me to discover that the average Turk has no large amount of religion anyway. He has great reverence for the Koran as the word of God, and as a revelation of the various duties he is expected to perform; but the Koran, which is written in Arabic, is a sealed book to him, only fragments of it being translated into Turkish, and, moreover, the great majority of the Turks being entirely ignorant of the art of reading. I am both logical, therefore, and truthful, when I say that while there are many devout Turks, and many who are even fanatical, the great majority allow their religion to sit lightly on their shoulders, but do not allow it to seriously interfere with what they wish to do. Perhaps in this respect they are not so very unlike the rest of the world, for I have known Christians who take the same view of the matter.

I do not say that in no instance did religion fan the flames of persecution, for that would be too extreme a statement, and one which could easily be contradicted. In Aintab, for instance, where, by the way, not more than five hundred were killed, the prime mover in the massacre was a howling dervish. On our arrival in the city, he was the first to offer





A DERVISH.





us the hospitality of his house, which adjoins the mosque in which he worships. He was a generous host, placing himself and all his belongings at our disposal. When I first looked into his face I saw that he was a man of fiery passions, and in spite of his tall fez and his picturesque costume, he reminded me of our own Pilgrim Fathers—sedate, stern, and with a certain cruel expression in his eyes. At that time I did not know of the part he had played on that eventful day. It was only when we were on the point of leaving that the story was told to me.

Now this dancing dervish does not stand alone in Anatolia. Many examples of a like nature came to my notice, but a very much smaller number than I expected to find, and I sought diligently for them. My opinions on this phase of the tragedy have undergone a radical change. I was prepared, indeed I fully expected, to find a wild fanaticism everywhere. From what I have read of the Mohammedans, it seemed natural that I should find it, and it would be strange if I did not. I am convinced, however, that religion had very little to do with the massacres, and that if religious differences had been the only point at issue there would not have been a single

massacre in all Anatolia. And I am sure that our own missionaries, whom I have visited at every opportunity, will bear me out in this statement. We must, therefore, dig deeper if we are to get at the main truth.

How many revolutionists there are on the frontier of Russia and Persia, I cannot say. That the number is considerable, and that they are mischief-makers, will not be denied. As I have shown in a previous chapter, their purpose is to cause an uprising which will force Europe to armed intervention. They do not expect the Armenians to win independence for themselves. It would be folly to regard that as even a remote possibility. But if the Armenians can be made to rebel it is clear that the government will set about to crush them, and will use the cruel methods which prevail everywhere in the East. If this persecution can be made to resemble a prairie-fire which threatens to consume everything before it, then Europe will be compelled to take the part of the oppressed, and to hold a kind of protectorate over them ; and that would very likely result, if not in actual autonomy, in something which would be akin to it.

Now I do not wonder that the Armenian who has emigrated should feel discontented at

the condition of his people under the misrule of Turkey. It cannot be otherwise. The man who recalls the past history of his country—its grandeur, its puissance, its literature, its soldierly qualities—and then sees it robbed of all these, persecuted, driven to despair, manhood sapped, womanhood outraged, must feel his blood gradually rising to the boiling-point.

If he has been a resident of Berlin, or Paris, or London, or New York, he is filled with modern ideas and has caught the spirit of modern civilization. From such a height he looks into the social and political depths, and sees his once proud people wallowing in the mire, deprived of all energizing opportunities, and his sword springs from its sheath before he is conscious of what he is doing.

All that I understand, and to that I give unstinted sympathy. It is an honor to any man to do what he can to uplift the nation to which he belongs, and to make great sacrifices to accomplish so glorious an end. He knows that the Armenians are being crowded into a corner, that they are under the iron heel of despotism, that fair play are words not to be found in the Turkish vocabulary. He knows also that they have the capacity, or would have it if circumstances permitted, to rule themselves, and



to duplicate the deeds which once made them famous. Why should he not, therefore, urge them to throw off a galling yoke, and take their rightful place among the peoples of the earth?

So much may be truthfully said in favor of the revolutionist. But, on the other hand, it is bad policy to attempt what cannot be done, and especially to advocate methods which must logically end in disaster. No one can free Armenia from Turkish rule except combined Europe. That is so clear that to state the fact is to prove it. But it is not more clear than that Europe is not inclined to do anything of the kind, and has no intention of doing it. The opportunity has been repeatedly offered, and every time it has been avoided. For the present, at least, there is not the slightest reason to look for such intervention. Things may have a trend in that direction, but they are like a river which suddenly meets an obstacle and makes a turn.

Will not Christian nations, you ask, rebuke the oppressor and help the oppressed? Yes, when it is for their interest to do so,—when they can gain some advantage, but not otherwise. There is no Christianity in national policy. Greed is the controlling principle. There

are Christian individuals, but not Christian nations. All international relations are based on pure selfishness. If the Armenians hope for European sympathy simply because they need it and deserve to have it, their hope will be disappointed. The man who stirs the Armenians to revolt in the expectation that the Powers will take up his quarrel, shows that he is a theorist rather than a statesman. The time may come when Europe will really help the Armenians, but only when the division of the spoils will pay for doing so. In the meanwhile the revolutionist who makes the Armenians restless, and calls down on their heads the cruel resentment of the Turkish government, is not only short-sighted, he is also a criminal.

This brings me to at least one of the causes which produced the massacres, and to a consideration of the condition of affairs which enables the Turk to excuse himself for wholesale murder.

I said to a scholarly Turk one day: "Does your religion allow you to murder people in this way?"

"That depends," was his prompt and candid answer.

"Ah, indeed," I replied; "depends on what?"

“The Koran,” he said, “tells us explicitly, that when a people living in our midst and professing a strange religion are peaceably inclined, and are loyal to our government, they are to be protected in all their rights equally with ourselves.”

“Very well,” I broke in; “does not that injunction apply to the Armenians?”

“But on the other hand,” he continued, “when they engage in insurrection, and plot against the government, they are to be destroyed, root and branch, and their property confiscated. The Armenians have been guilty of that offence, and they deserve nothing but the traitor’s doom. If you will look into the pages of your own Old Testament you will find the same injunction in almost the same identical words.”

“But that was three thousand years ago,” I suggested.

“True,” he answered, “but God does not change in three thousand years, and what was right then must be right now.”

His argument was unique and interesting to say the least.

These revolutionists, who try to curry favor with foreign nations and who have succeeded in exciting a maudlin sympathy in England, have



been one of the prime causes of all the mischief that has been done, and of all the misery that has followed as a consequence. The so-called Christian Powers have either hypocritically or selfishly been their abettors.

England has assumed a sort of protectorate over the Armenians, but her protection is a sham and a shame. She can talk eloquently about oppression, and she can play the simple and easy game of bluff; but when deeds are to be done she retires from the field. She is more responsible for the cold-blooded murders which have come near to exterminating the Armenians than all other nations put together. She is bold with her lips but cowardly with her hands. If she had never known that there was such a people as the Armenians, I honestly believe the massacres would never have taken place.

As for Germany, she has no interest in the Armenian question, and does n't care a penny whether the race is exterminated or not. She has won the favor of the Sultan and is working that favor to its utmost extent. Constantinople is being flooded with Germans. They have taken possession of the city, are selling their guns to Turkey and building her railroads and drilling her army. What are a

few dead Armenians in comparison with the profits she is reaping? Turkey might repeat the massacres, and Germany would not lift her finger. The humanities count for nothing; but Turkish gold is worth having. The young War Lord is the nominal "guide, philosopher, and friend" of Turkey, but he charges a high price for his good-will, and the Sultan is compelled to pay it.

And Russia? Well, Russia has killed too many of her own subjects to trouble about fifty or sixty thousand murders in Anatolia. She expects to annex Asia Minor some day, and merely awaits a fitting opportunity. The more embarrassments at Yildiz, the more hearty are the congratulations in St. Petersburg. Every disaster in Turkey which forces Europe to protest, brings the time nearer when Russia can find the occasion she seeks. As a consequence she has been all along tacitly aiding revolt in Anatolia. No one can cross her southern frontier without permission, and that permission is hard to get; but when an Armenian fire-eater wants to cross with a box of guns, the police never see him.

That is the attitude of the Powers, and it is not only an obstacle in the way of law and order in Armenia, but it is a positive incite-

ment to revolution. If these Powers cared for anything besides their own interest; if they really had a particle of the Christianity which they profess, they could make it as impossible for Turkey to repeat her misdeeds, as it is for water to run up-hill. The Sultan, however, knows that he is quite at liberty to do as he pleases, and that the rival nations of the Continent will do nothing more than throw some parliamentary debate at his head, and then cry quits. There is barbarism in Turkey, plenty of it; but the barbarism of the Powers who promise protection, never intending to furnish it, is not far behind.

The crux of the problem lies just there. England has deliberately fostered the hope for autonomy among the Armenians, and led them to believe that she would assist them to its attainment. When we stopped for lunch one day among the high hills back of Alexandretta, the Mediterranean in sight, my attention was attracted by the picture of a man-of-war on the wall. Someone had written beneath it, "That is what England will send to help Armenia become a Bulgaria." The revolutionists are doing what they can to keep that illusion alive. Not in all cases, but in seven out of ten where massacres have occurred, you will find that



these rascals have been at work playing on the simple-minded folk and making them restive. At the present moment they have little or no influence, thank Heaven, for the people see that when they had their trouble nobody came to their assistance. I have been told by Armenians themselves that when one of these rebels makes his appearance the people fly to their houses and bolt their doors, for they have had horror enough from that source.

Autonomy in Anatolia is the wildest kind of wild dream. We Americans know how to sympathize with the love of liberty wherever cherished. We believe that it is worth any price which the circumstances may demand. But there is not a sensible American in all the land who would advise the Armenians to make a fight for it, especially if he has visited their country and taken note of their surroundings. There is no wisdom in doing battle when the day is lost before the battle begins. The most desperate courage, the most spendthrift expenditure of life, would avail nothing in a conflict of that kind.

There are half a million Armenians and a million and a half of Kurds in that section. These Armenians are not massed, they are scattered. If you take a run through Kur-



A KURDISH CHIEF.





distan, you will find for every Armenian village a half-dozen or more Kurdish or Circassian villages. If these Armenians were in one quarter, they might perhaps build fortifications and make some show of resistance—at least they could fight for their liberty and die for its sake—but as matters are now, there is n't the slightest use in dying for liberty, for it is not to be had. The million and a half are fighting men, each one armed to the teeth; the half-million are not only unarmed, but unacquainted with the use of arms. I don't think I ever saw a Kurd who did not have a weapon of some kind, and that is a good deal to say after having travelled through three hundred miles of their territory. Along that same journey I met only one Armenian who had a gun, and he was hunting in company with a Turk.

And yet the stupid revolutionists cross the Persian frontier a few hours east of Van and make that city a dangerous place to live in. There may be only a few scores of them, but the Turk has unlimited powers of imagination, and magnifies not only their number but their influence. His peculiarity is that he gets easily scared, and is easily thrown into a panic. I hardly know how to account for this fact. If

the average Turk had any sense, he would see at the first glance, that since the half-million of unarmed Armenians are scattered among a million and a half of armed Kurds, he has really nothing to fear from insurrection. Instead of using his reason, however, he gives his imagination full swing, and accepts every wild rumor as historic fact. Being frightened out of his wits by a bugbear, he lets loose his hordes, and they proceed to kill everybody who comes in their way. He really thought that the whole country was infested with rebels, and that unless the most heroic measures were taken, the government would be overthrown.

And here let me pay my tribute to the marvellous heroism of the Armenians in the heartrending ordeal through which they passed. From all parts of Anatolia, from Harpoot in the west to Van on the Persian border, come the same stories of moral courage with which they met their doom. The true and indomitable spirit of martyrdom prevailed throughout that region, and those poor victims of a very stupid persecution which was profitable to no one, were as noble in their death as they were faithful in their lives. They saw their houses looted and then burned ;

they were driven into the mountains to perish with cold and hunger ; they lost all their cattle and fell from comfort to the direst poverty ; and yet they accepted their fate with a resignation which excites not only our surprise but our admiration.

It is true that in exceptional instances, as, for example, at Biredjik, on the banks of the Euphrates, they renounced their religion to save their lives ; but I for one am not inclined to criticise them for that. I cannot speak for others who may be more sturdy of heart than I, but if the dread alternative were thrust upon me, death or change of my form of religion—well, under such circumstances I could not answer for myself. Let those who think they would prefer to have their skulls broken with a club blame the people of Biredjik if they choose to do so—I can only say that I myself dare not do it.

But in the history of the massacres those who made an outward surrender of their faith were very few. The vast majority were strong enough to face the murderer, and let him sheathe his weapon in their quivering flesh. What degree of praise is due to such ? Remember that they were mostly poor people, living in mud-huts and filth just as all their



neighbors did, illiterate, uncultured, unrefined ; and yet when the great crisis came, they bowed their heads and died for the sake of their religion. Think of women, living in the environment which I have described, holding their honor at such a price that they deliberately leaped from the banks of the Euphrates and sank beneath the raging torrent rather than submit to the lust of the Kurd. Can the old days of Roman persecution furnish nobler examples of self-sacrifice than these? I think not, and when I went along the borders of the region where these things took place, I more than once lifted my hat to the dead who had died rather than renounce their religion, and to the living who will do the same thing if the sword of the Moslem ever flies from its scabbard again.

From my room in the Pera Palace Hotel—I kept my windows open all the time—I could hear the dull thud of the watchman's bludgeon as he struck the pavement to prove that he was attending to his duty, and the sound always made my heart ache. During those frightful hours in August when several thousand Armenians were killed, the work was done with just such clubs as that. Not a word was uttered, everything was ominously quiet, there

was no rioting, no noise, but silent murder. In this courtyard were a dozen bodies, along that narrow street were forty or fifty. The air was thick with sickening massacre. "But did not the Armenians make resistance?" I asked my companion who went with me and recalled the scenes of the tragedy, for he witnessed a large part of it. "No," he replied; "not in a single instance, so far as I know. I saw an Armenian come out of his house to see what was going on. A Turk caught sight of him, and raised his stick. The Armenian was perhaps dazed, I cannot tell, but he made no motion,—stood still as a marble statue. The fatal blow was struck, and the poor fellow dropped to the ground."

Another instance. An Armenian was employed in one of the railroad stations. He was standing on the platform when the mob approached. A Turk, who knew the man to be a faithful servant, handed him a pistol, saying: "It is an outrage; take this and defend yourself; it is good for six of the rascals." The Armenian took the weapon, hesitated for a moment, and then handed it back with a groan. "I can't do it," he said. "I would rather die than commit murder." In less than ten minutes he was a bruised and bleeding

corpse, and the fiends had started on the track of another victim.

I tell these stories, which I am able to vouch for, not because I wish to harrow your feelings and make each particular hair stand on end, for I am no tragedy-monger, but simply to prove that the Armenian has still a strain of the ancestral blood in him, which comes to the surface and makes a hero of him when he faces death.

But where is the sense, you ask, in murdering a multitude, because there happen to be a few revolutionists in the land? Why not capture the rogues and leave the innocent at peace? The only answer is, that that is not the Oriental way of doing things. There are only two isolated instances of that course being pursued in the whole of Anatolia, and I do not believe that they can be duplicated. Let me refer to one of them. We were spending the night at a little village not far from the upper end of Lake Van, and I had just ordered my blankets spread, for I was very tired, and we had a hard morrow ahead, when a gentleman was announced who was specially eager for an interview. I was not anxious to see him, for we had just got rid of a lot of village potentates to whom we were simply curiosities, but still I



asked him to come in. It turned out that he was the Armenian Episcopos of Bayazid.

“I have travelled thirty-six hours,” he said, “for the pleasure of this moment, and I shall begin my homeward journey at daylight to-morrow.”

I could not withstand an appeal of that kind, and at once ordered coffee and cigarettes.

“Bayazid,” I said half in soliloquy; “that is a bad region near the Russian border. Have you had much trouble?”

“We might have had,” was his answer; “but it was avoided, and that is what I have come to talk to you about.”

“Avoided it, did you? You were very fortunate. How did it happen?”

“The colonel of one of the Hamidieh regiments whom you met an hour ago,” he answered, “is governor of the district. He has had a good deal of experience in administering affairs.”

“And you, an Armenian, are on amicable terms with him, a Turk?” I asked.

“On the best of terms,” was the reply. “The Armenian missionary in Van is on the same terms with the Vali of that Vilayet, and if this were the case everywhere much that has occurred might have been averted. The

difficulty with us Armenians is that the Valis make political capital out of their hatred of us, or their assumed hatred, for it is not always genuine, though unfortunately it is always popular. The same holds good with the missionaries. They are never anything but suspects in the eye of the law, whereas in fact they help to preserve order."

"Well," I broke in, "tell me about Bayazid. You have revolutionists there?"

"We did have four or five, and they did their best to stir up my people. But the colonel got wind of their doings, watched them for a while, and then had them quietly arrested."

"And now?" I asked.

"And now they are safe in prison."

"Then your friend the colonel," I said, "saved the city from a massacre?"

"Precisely," he answered; "and that is what I came to tell you."

"In a word," I said, "the four or five guilty ones are behind the bars, and the thousands of innocent people are still alive. Now," I continued, "why has n't that policy been pursued throughout Anatolia? Can you tell me that?"

"Because," he answered, with a shrug of the shoulders, as he puffed a whiff of smoke to the ceiling, "because we are Asiatics and not Eu-

ropeans. Massacre, wholesale massacre, is the habit of Asiatic nations."

As he rose to leave, I said: "If the Great Powers had a little more Christianity and a little less selfish interest that habit could be broken up in thirty days."

"Perhaps," was his rather sorrowful reply, as he bade me good-night; "but the word Christian is a misnomer when applied to the Great Powers."

I think his criticism was entirely just.

Now comes a question which to me seems very important. How great is the responsibility of the Sultan for these massacres? I know that many people believe he planned them all. Some of the foreigners in Anatolia, both lay and clerical, feel assured that this is the case. I have read in American papers that he is "the Great Assassin." It may be so, but from the facts which have come to my knowledge I cannot honestly believe it.

I am quite aware that I make myself liable to the charge of being an apologist for the man in Yildiz, but I see no reason for not telling the truth, as I understand it, in this as well as in other matters. Neither am I sorry to differ with most of my friends; for it is much more satisfactory to regard the Sultan as a ruler not



entirely cruel and bloodthirsty, than to execrate him for one of the blackest crimes of the age.

It is my conviction that he is ignorant of a great many matters with which he ought to be made acquainted. If he lived in America, where the press is entirely free, he would know every morning exactly what the people thought of his personal character and of his public measures. But instead of living in a free country he lives in a magnificent prison-house, and is practically the chief prisoner of the Empire, and the one most closely watched. He not only has reason to believe that everybody is suspicious of him, but has equally good reason to be suspicious of everybody. He can have no confidential friends, and there is not a man in Turkey who dares to tell him the whole truth. Everything he knows, about Anatolia for instance, or about any incident or event which occurs in the interior, is pruned and trimmed to suit the purposes which the Palace clique has in view. The sycophants—and they are all sycophants at that end of the city—tell him whatever they think it will please him to know, and nothing else. An hour's plain talk—good, frank, candid talk—would create more confusion than an explosion of dynamite. Every man's official position, and

his salary, and his hope of preferment, depend largely on his being a toady and concealing the fact. No sovereign who represents an unlimited despotism, as the Sultan of Turkey does, is anything more than the tool of shrewd manipulators, and a tool who knows only too well that his tenure of office may suddenly terminate whenever his enemies can trust each other enough to act in concert.

Let me illustrate from facts which have come from the best of sources. Politics are more of a trade in Turkey than they are in New York. Offices are obtained by intrigue—I speak now of Anatolia specially—and are held against the efforts of rivals by the discreet distribution of the spoils. Money has a more telling effect there than in any of the so-called civilized countries. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, to have what we call a pull on the appointing power. This is obtained in several ways, but I will speak of only one. A military or a civil official, as the case may be, hankers for preferment, or wants a gold medal for meritorious service, or feels that he is being undermined by someone who is on the still-hunt for his place and for his authority to steal from the public crib. How is he to reach this consummation of his envious hopes? Sup-

pose—since the Armenian question is the best means of getting up a scare—he hears that some rogue, perhaps a genuine revolutionist, has killed a Turkish soldier in a fight. He has all the material he wants for a dramatic display. A little judicious lying, by means of which the single Armenian is multiplied by twelve, and the number of soldiers killed multiplied by six, and he has the long-sought opportunity. Who knows whether he tells the truth or not? The general public cannot deny his statements, for they are densely ignorant and ready to be frightened out of their wits by any fake that may find its way into their ears. A lurid and hurried telegram is sent to the Palace, declaring that the Armenians have risen; that armed squads of them are parading through the streets; that there is imminent danger of an attack. Then is added the sly statement that the means of quelling them are at hand, and that he only awaits the orders of His Majesty to proceed at once.

This is always an effective bit of acting. Can the Sultan find out the falsehood of the story told? Who would have the courage to tell him that the whole affair is a tissue of lies, and that the perpetrator of the crime deserves to have his ears nailed to a post? Not a man



in the Empire would do that, for he would at once be suspected of sympathy with rebels, and Heaven only knows what dire consequences would be visited upon him. The Sultan, therefore, sends instructions to this official villain to "put down the rebellion with such severity as may seem to be necessary." Then secret orders are issued, and the next day, at the sound of the trumpet, a wholesale massacre begins; and when it ends a thousand or two thousand perfectly innocent men have been murdered.

What is the upshot of the affair? The official sends another telegram saying that forty or fifty Armenians were killed in a riot, but that the brave soldiers and the loyal people acted together and the rebellion was suppressed.

A medal or decoration of some kind comes back from the Palace as a reward for the courage and patriotism of a faithful servant.

I have no doubt that what I have stated is simple historic fact, but you will not find it in any of the public documents of Turkey. They are not written for truth's sake, but rather for the sake of hiding the truth.

I have taken only a cursory view of the massacres, but I think that my conclusions, so far as they go, will not be found to be wrong.

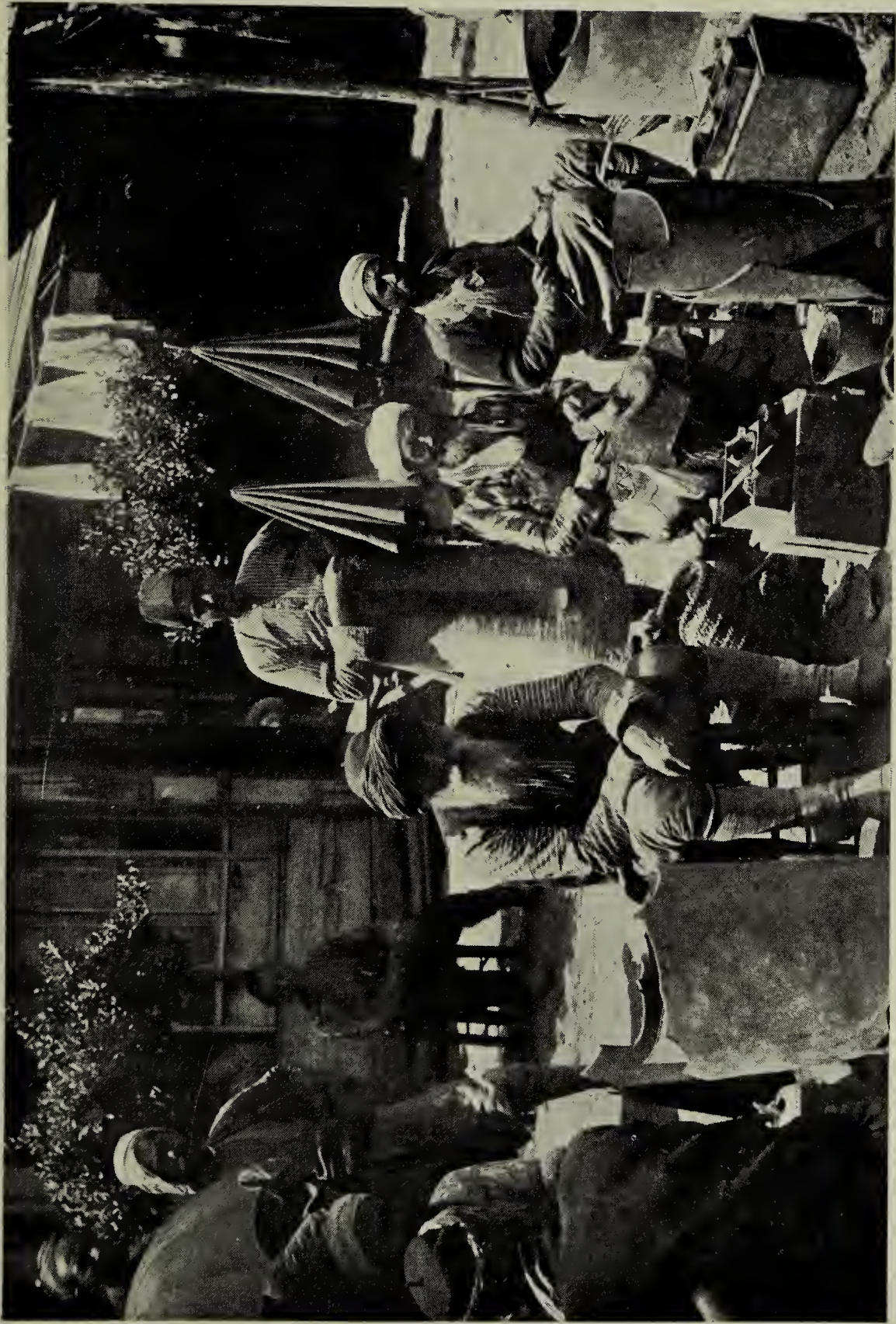
## CHAPTER IX.

### QUEER PEOPLE.

ONE meets queer people in his travels, and that is one reason why I like to travel. The queerer they are, the more I like them. I ought, therefore, to be entirely satisfied with my journeyings in Anatolia, for if, in some of the villages men and children followed us about with as much curiosity as if we had dropped from the moon, I was equally curious about them.

I happen to be in a reminiscent mood just now, and perhaps you will be patient while I indulge in that luxury. In the drawing-room of my brain a sort of surprise-party has gathered—odd facts, pleasant and unpleasant incidents, a motley group—and I should like to introduce you to them. I am all the more glad to do this because in the last two chapters we have been supping on horrors, and these few pages may possibly act as a palliative.





SHOEMAKERS.





First of all, let me chat for a while about the roads, because my recollection of them is very vivid, painfully vivid, so awfully vivid that my muscles ache all over again as I think of them. Our route from Trebizond on the north to Alexandretta and the Mediterranean on the south, covered nearly nine hundred miles. Of course it is not that distance between the two points as the crow flies, but at times we were compelled to make long *détours* on account of the snow, and more than once were forced to turn aside from even the bridle-path and find our way over a mountain of considerable height. We had the best of good-fortune, or on any one of three or four occasions I should have said good-by to friends and home.

Talking of roads leads me to say, with decided emphasis, that there are no roads in Anatolia. You have to do as the brave troops of Xenophon did—make your own road as you go along, and you may thank heaven that there are no walls or fences anywhere to obstruct your way.

Let me be a little more exact in my statement. When we started from Trebizond we took carriages, and a carriage naturally implies a road. The implication is perfect; the road was abominable. It may have been laid out

by the Romans, or perhaps by the Grand Comnenus when he founded a short-lived empire on the shore of the Euxine, but you may be sure that it has not been repaired since that time. The storms have washed the loose earth away, and left the rocks like an archipelago. A little dynamite would make short work with them, but the Sultan, for good and sufficient reasons, no doubt, has forbidden the manufacture or importation of that dangerous explosive. When the driver, who squats on his seat with his legs under him, happens to be drowsy, you strike one of these rocks with your fore wheel, and then you lose half an hour mending the harness with whatever rope or twine may be handy. Your so-called carriage has been through so many experiences of that kind that it has come to resemble Dr. Holmes's "One Hoss Shay," which may go all to pieces at any moment. When you start in the morning in a vehicle of that sort, you may be sure that nothing short of a special Providence will permit you to reach your destination at night, for such a ramshackle concern in a chronic state of delirium-tremens was never seen before. The driver, however, takes things coolly, whipping his horses into a trot in a moment of mental aberration, but generally allowing



them to go their own gait. Their own gait, by the way, is very peculiar. On level ground they like to walk, but if there is a sharp turn ahead, and on the side of a precipice, they have a notion that the only thing to do is to gallop. Your hair may stand on end, but the horses seem to enjoy it.

At the end of every few miles the road becomes so very rocky that you conclude to get out and walk. That is to say, we foreigners walked, but the true Turk never dreams of indulging in that luxury. If you go up a hill like a fly on a window-pane, he philosophically watches the straining and struggling of the poor brutes from the back seat, bracing himself against a jolt that may throw him in a heap into the bottom of the carriage. He has a constitutional bias against effort of any kind, and if the horses break down he will simply engage another pair at the next village. We rode two hundred miles in this way to Erzerum, the only break being two days in the saddle, and our experiences were altogether too wonderful to relate. There was not a bone in our bodies that did not ache, nor a muscle that was not strained.

Remember that in all this stretch of nearly nine hundred miles there is not a single hotel.

A country without a hotel ! that is Eastern Anatolia. What ! not in Erzeroom, with a population of over forty thousand ; nor in Bitlis with thirty-five thousand inhabitants ; nor in Diarbekir in which thirty thousand people live, or think they live ; nor in Aintab, where forty thousand reside ? No, not a single hotel, or anything that resembles one. What kind of people are they, you ask, that they should afford no accommodation to travellers ? Well, you asked that question, not I, and with your permission I will leave you to answer it.

Instead of hotels there are khans. Now a khan is worthy to be described. As a general thing it is a large one-story house built round the four sides of a hollow square. It is situated at any convenient halting-place, and is especially for the accommodation of caravans and their drivers. Sometimes it is in the village, but frequently it stands alone on some hillside miles away from it. You enter it under an archway, and on the right side of the entrance, and on the left also is a room for guests, whether they be teamsters or tourists. As drivers occupy the thin mattresses most of the time, and as these drivers are not over cleanly in their habits, the rooms become densely inhabited by a large variety of insects, whose acquaintance

it is not desirable to make. In order to secure ourselves against unwelcome encroachments, we had been provided with camp-beds, which lifted us about eighteen inches from the floor, and on these beds we spread a rubber blanket, the rubber being very unpleasant to the olfactory nerves of the bugs. Then we enjoyed comparative, but not entire, immunity. The place was inconceivably stuffy; the floor was generally the bare earth, and the receptacle of all sorts of filth.

Of course no food is provided in these khans, but each one looks out for himself in that regard. We took a cook with us and a fair supply of canned goods, and tea and coffee, and as once in a while we could buy a few eggs, we managed not to starve. During the daytime I was comfortable and happy, for the country through which we passed was marvellously beautiful and interesting. The air was dry, crisp, frosty, and invigorating. I delight in cold weather, and so when the mercury dropped to ten degrees below zero centigrade, I was in my element. My chief trouble was that I had a terrific appetite, and either nothing to eat, or food which repelled me. The scenery—well, I have already tried to describe that, and will say now that the mountains in heaven may be more



magnificent than the mountains in Asia Minor, though I doubt it.

But the nights! Words fail me to tell what my agonies were. Brought up in a New England home, I have nevertheless been willing to eat the prescribed peck of dirt if it is scattered in homœopathic quantities through a lifetime, but to have the peck changed into a bushel, and to be required to live on it as a regular diet, that is another matter, and I object. It is wonderful, though, what a man can endure when he is forced to, and how his habits can accommodate themselves to circumstances.

The only proper way to travel is in the saddle. The Anatolian horse is a treasure beyond price, in spite of the fact that you can buy a very fair one for twenty-five or thirty dollars. Where an American or English beast would break his neck, the little Anatolian fellow simply enjoys himself. And he is hardy; so hardy and withal so willing that you need n't waste sympathy on him any more than on a steam-engine. He can do wonders, and having done them seems to be fresh enough to do still greater wonders. I rode one day by the side of a Kurd who sat his horse as though he were a part of him, and expressed my admiration for the animal, for the grace of every movement, for

the way he lifted and planted his feet, and for the exquisite pose of his head, with its flashing eyes and small ears. In reply to my questions he told me the horse was twelve years old, an age when we think about taking off his shoes and turning him out to pasture. "You have to use him carefully, then?" I said. He gave me a quizzical look, implying that I didn't know much about horses—which is not true, by the way—and replied: "No, he is just in his prime. You don't see him at his best to-day. It is only after the third day's march that he begins to show his mettle."

This Anatolian quadruped must be a cross between an ordinary horse and a chamois goat. He is the surest-footed creature in the world; can climb up one side of a rock and skate down the other side with perfect ease. He has never seen anything but rocks all his days, and is simply the result of the survival of the fittest. Those who stumbled died, and those who learned how not to stumble survived. That is the only way in which I can account for their peculiarities. I have been in some places so difficult to traverse that I wondered what my acquaintances at home would say in my obituary notice; but this twenty-five dollar quadruped saw me safely through them. When he

came upon a specially difficult rod or two he would stand still for fifteen seconds and reflect. Then having made up his mind, he went carefully forward, putting his feet down as cautiously as though treading between eggs and anxious not to break one, and when it was all over stood stock still for another fifteen seconds, and emitted a series of congratulatory grunts. Whether he was addressing me, or only soliloquizing, I have never been able to ascertain, but I have often wished I could speak his language and have a chat on the subject. At first I used to direct him which way to go, but if he didn't like the way I indicated, he would shake his head and then obstinately do as he pleased. I soon discovered that he had more experience than I, and gave him a loose rein.

On one occasion we followed the Tigris, a rushing torrent, for a long distance. It became necessary to climb a steep spur in one part of the journey, picking our way among boulders, and turning sharp angles, at which a misstep would have been fatal. After I had done that sort of thing eight or ten times, I got off my horse, saying that I was a bit stiff in the joints and would walk a mile or two. The truth was I was scared. My nerves had



been tense for six or eight hours and began to give way. It was in order to recover my equilibrium that I wanted to be on solid ground for a half-hour. I am sure that my horse saw through my prevarication, knew that I was scared, and lost a moiety of his respect for me. From that day to this I have regretted that I did not stick to the saddle at all hazards, for if that brute ever talks about the incident to his equine gossips, I am sure he will ridicule the American traveller who walked up that incline because he did n't dare to ride. I believe I should have been perfectly safe on his back, for he could climb up one side of a ladder with me and down the other side, but—well, I was tired of riding, that's all.

Referring again to the people, I like the Turkish mode of salutation. It has a flavor of Oriental poetry in it. The Turk does not probably mean any more by it than we do when we lift the hat or shake the hand, but all the same I like it. When he meets you he makes three gestures. First, he bends low and points to his feet, meaning thereby that he is ready to be used in your service; then he puts his hand on his heart, implying that he has great confidence in you, and that you are very dear to him; and lastly he touches his forehead, sig-

nifying that he will intelligently do what you request of him.

The Turks strike me as serious, sedate, self-contained folk, with none of that brusqueness which obtains so largely with us. It is possible that under certain circumstances they may be boisterous and hilarious, but I have never seen them so. They have always been grave and dignified, with an absence of that element of humor, or that physical effervescence of vitality which is found everywhere else. If they have a suspicious temperament, and they certainly do have it in a remarkable degree, they are also saturnine. Are they saturnine because they are suspicious? And in spite of these peculiarities they are nothing but overgrown children, without ideas that are either mature or broad.

I do not believe that it is their religion which makes them narrow, as some travellers affirm, but a dreadful lack of mental discipline which only the schoolhouse, the newspaper, and the book can produce. In proof of this I suggest the fact that the censorship of the press is so rigid that whole cities with thousands and tens of thousands of inhabitants, are without a single newspaper, and you may go through town after town and find therein no place in which books

are sold. They are thrown, therefore, on their own intellectual resources, and when a man walks in a narrow circle all his days, is it any wonder that he takes a narrow view, or that he breathes a pensive atmosphere? The Turk's mind is in a dormant state. Its capabilities are not yet known, and the serious question is whether, under the present *régime* of suppression of all news except such as is absolutely colorless, it ever will be known?

In trying to find some of the contributory causes of the present sluggish condition of Turkey, I have noticed the lack of manufactories. The beneficent influence which is produced by organized labor, by an aggregate of individuals who rub against each other in their daily talks is almost entirely unknown in that part of the world. A machine shop, a woollen mill is a factor of progress. The ambition of the employés is fierce; there is a competition in the exchange of ideas; whatever genius or talent resides in a man is stimulated, and it will go hard if out of every hundred, a round dozen do not lay up a little property, while one or two develop into men who are able to do business on their own account. These factories create a lower middle class of well-to-do and thoughtful citizens who help to fashion



a healthy public opinion. They are the backbone of every country. Turkey has no such backbone, a fact which helps to solve a good many problems respecting her future prospects. The trades, in Anatolia at least, are just what they were before modern machinery was invented. You are apt, in most cases, to buy an article of the man who made it. If the hum of manufacture could be heard among her hills and in her valleys, she would be so changed in a generation that the Sultan could not recognize that part of his Empire.

But I am edging towards the subject of political economy, and that is foreign to my present purpose.

I recall an incident illustrative of the perverse obstinacy with which the Turk clings to the old and repudiates the new. We stopped one day at a very small village for luncheon. We bestrode our saddles early that morning, just before daylight, indeed, and after a hard ride were both tired and hungry. I remember that Migirditch, our Armenian cook, whose business it was to keep with us for just such emergencies, had gone ahead at a breakneck rate, had missed this village, and could therefore afford us no relief. I was greatly exasperated, and in no mood to bear with the savage

dogs who attacked us, apparently thinking an American would make a good meal. My temper was not appeased when one of the house-owners brought me the only two eggs in the village, and I found, after giving one away, that the one I kept had reached a stage of insufferable decrepitude. But all that is an aside.

The houses were so filthy that it was impossible to enter any one of them. We therefore spread our blankets on the bare ground outside, and sat there with chattering teeth, for the cold wind went through us as though we were sieves. I said to one of the Turks, pointing to the evidences of poverty everywhere visible, "I have never in my life seen such raggedness and squalor." He looked at me in surprise, and replied, "Why, my dear Doctor, these people are not poor, they are very well off. They have horses and cows and buffaloes grazing on the hills yonder."

"Then why," I answered, surprised in my turn, "why do they live in this wretched condition?"

"It is simply the habit of the country," he answered.

The habit of the country! I have said some hard things about the Turks and to them, but

never anything as hard as that. What can you do for a man who has the means to procure the comforts of life and deliberately prefers to go without them, not because he is penurious, but because, his father and grandfather being filthy, he thinks filth a benediction? The boys and girls of the village were barefooted and barelegged. They may have been washed once on a time, but it was certainly when they were caught in a heavy shower. The cows occupied the best part of the house, and the little room which the peasants had reserved for themselves had never had a breath of pure air in it. But they liked it, and though they had the means to put themselves in a better environment, they chose to live less comfortably than their cows.

Now suppose some enterprising capitalist should start a factory in the vicinity, taming the turbulent stream and using it to drive his machinery, and should build clean, whitewashed cottages for his employés, would the methods of the fathers and grandfathers still prevail? One of two things would happen—either the villagers would see how happily poor people can live when they know how to, or else they would burn the mill and go on living in filth. Which of these two possibilities would be re-



alized? I confess I don't know. Sometimes I think the one, and sometimes the other.

I could tell you anecdotes by the hour showing the childlike simplicity of the Turkish character. He has always had to me an extremely interesting personality. Long before I dreamed of going to Anatolia, I eagerly read all I could find relating to him. There are so many things I like in him, among others his sublime courage as a soldier. When the books told me that one reason for his bravery was his belief that he would go straight from the battle-field to heaven, I regarded the statement as indicative of a wild imagination, but one day I was riding by the side of an old soldier. He had just come from the war against Greece, and this fable—so I deemed it—recurred to my mind.

“The Turks may be deficient in some respects,” I began, “but all the world knows that they can fight.”

He was evidently pleased with the compliment, a part of which he could justly appropriate for himself.

“What gives them this recklessness in the face of peril?” I asked. “They are certainly not as well drilled or disciplined as the armies of some other nations.”

I saw that I had won his confidence, and after a moment's hesitation, he answered, "Perhaps it is their religion."

"Indeed," said I, "that is very interesting; but what is there in religion to make a man brave on the field?"

"He is in the hands of God," was the quiet response. "If it is God's will, no bullet can reach him."

"But," I broke in, "suppose a bullet does reach him, what then?"

"Every dead soldier goes to Paradise," he answered, and said no more. We rode on silently, each thinking his own thoughts.

It was a pleasant incident and I prize it very highly.

Once more: we several times passed a bush on the road on the branches of which innumerable bits of colored rag were tied. When I had seen about a dozen of them my curiosity was excited and I asked one of the Turks what the thing meant. He told me that they were a kind of shrine where people come and pray for their sick. Under such circumstances Allah is the only resource, for there is no physician within reach, and the old women who concoct mysterious medicines from herbs are not always trusted. So the mother and

father make a pilgrimage to one of these shrines and leave a rag there as proof that they have performed their duty.

That night our resting-place was a Kurdish hamlet. After drinking coffee and smoking a cigarette, the petty officials sat about in a circle and we entered into conversation about the crops, the horses, the cattle, and such other matters as claimed their daily attention. They explained the peculiar interest in us which we had observed, by saying that they had never before seen a European. At last, then, we were on primitive ground. When we arrived, they killed a sheep and divided it among the poor. It was a token of gratitude for our visit. They had heard that we were somewhere in the neighborhood, but did not dare to hope that we would honor them in that way. The sheep was offered in very much the same spirit in which the Israelites in the time of Abraham did the same thing, and as I looked on the picturesque group, most of them aged men, I seemed to have suddenly dropped out of the nineteenth century after Christ into the fifteenth before the Christian era. I was with Old Testament people, and they were living the Old Testament life in the veritable Old Testament way.



There was only one living-room in the khan, and that our host had given to Mr. Whitman and myself. His hospitality made us forget that there is no wood in that country, that the fuel in the fireplace was dried dung, and that we nearly suffocated with smoke. He explained his apparent neglect of the others of the party, whom he had put in the stable, by saying with great dignity: "I must be kind to them, because they are members of our government, but I must be more kind to you, because you are the guests of our government. The others shall be treated with hospitality, but I shall treat you with distinction."

That Kurd had the refinement of one of Nature's noblemen, and as he spoke I was both charmed by his grace and impressed by his wonderful simplicity.

The next morning all the magnates came to see us take breakfast and to say good-by. There were half-a-dozen of them, gray-headed, gray-bearded, turbaned monarchs of all they surveyed. They asked us a thousand questions, for the Turk and Kurd are fond of gossip, and we in turn asked them as many. After coffee, or rather cocoa, which is better than coffee on a hard journey, I began my regular gymnastics, stooping until my finger-tips



A KURDISH NOBLEMAN.





touched the floor, throwing my arms about like the spokes of a wheel in motion, striking out from the shoulder, drawing in long breaths, and smiting my chest. I never omitted this exercise unless compelled to do so by too narrow quarters, and attribute to it my freedom from colds and my general good health. I would gladly have taken a sponge bath, but it was impossible to get water enough or a proper vessel for the purpose. The Turk washes before and after every meal, because his fingers are often a substitute for knife and fork, but a pint of water poured in instalments over his hands is sufficient for the purpose in view. In a country so full of running streams that you ford one every day, water is used with great economy.

Well, when I got under way with my exercise, and felt my blood tingling in my veins like a current of lava, my audience became intensely excited. Conversation at first dropped to a whisper, and then ceased altogether. After a while, word was quietly passed around the circle, and one after the other rose from his mat and stole out of the room. I felt for a while that I had in some way offended them, and proposed to call them back and apologize for my unconscious affront. At that moment

our dragoman, Hermann, entered, and I saw a curious smile on his lips.

“What has happened, Hermann?” I asked. “You are in too hilarious a mood for this early hour in the morning.”

He could stand it no longer, and broke into a hearty laugh.

“Tell me instantly, sir,” I cried with mock severity; “tell me instantly what causes this unseemly mirth, or you are a doomed man.”

“Why, Doctor,” he answered, “I am laughing at what I overheard in the yard. What have you been doing?”

“Doing?” I said; “why, nothing. That is, I have been taking my usual gymnastics, that’s all. Is there anything funny in that?”

“They think so,” he replied with a chuckle.

“Who? the Kurds?” I asked.

“All of them,” he answered. “They think you have been going through some religious exercise, and they all retired under the impression that if they remained you would regard it as an intrusion.”

Then I laughed, and we all laughed.

There is one other phase of Turkish life to which I must refer, and then I shall have done. We had not proceeded far on our trip before I began to feel that something had gone

wrong. Life had suddenly become tasteless and insipid. What had happened that should not have happened, or what had not happened that should have happened? I pondered, and at last came to the conclusion that I was simply in the dumps, and that was all. When I went into our dining-room at Erzeroom for lunch one day—I was a little late—the truth flashed upon me and my problem was solved. I had not seen a woman's face since I left Constantinople, and that was what was the matter with me.

In America our lives are more or less influenced by the presence of women. They are an essential factor in our kind of civilization, and I am firmly of the opinion that there can be no civilization worth having without them. They are not only a component part of every individual's life, but they are also a part of the life of society, and society would fall back into semi-barbarism were it not for the women. When we invite a friend to dinner, the wife and daughters grace the occasion; when we go to the opera, the gay costumes of the women make the spectacle complete; when we enter a store, it is a girl who waits on us, and when we lounge along the avenue, we meet our women acquaintances and chat with



them. If we read a book which specially interests us, the chances are about even that a woman has written it. We are all unconscious of the influence of woman, because it is at work all the time, just as we are unconscious of the sunshine though ready to acknowledge, when we think of the matter, how dependent we are on it.

No women in Turkey! that is, none who are visible. If you dine with a Turk, the women of the household are conspicuous by their absence. No matter how intimate you may be, you never see your friend's wife. The consequence to both sexes is demoralizing, and I may even venture the assertion that true progress is impossible unless women and men join forces to shape its quality and methods. Put a dozen men together and their conversation will degenerate into something approaching the vulgar. A dozen women under the same circumstances lose a part of their moral tone and find their chief pleasure in gossip. Introduce into the company of men two or three refined and cultured women, and the effect is magical. The *double entendre* is suppressed; the conversation rises to a higher level; a sort of chivalry is developed, and self-respect is advanced a full hundred per cent.

Of course I can understand that when the Turks were nomads, and when a robber baron coveted the pretty wife of his neighbor baron four hours away, there was possibly some reason for keeping women in seclusion. If a man regarded his wife as a jewel above price, he did not care to make an exhibition of her, with the chance of having her carried off by force to grace the harem of his rival. If she kept her face covered when she ventured abroad, and if she retired to another part of the castle when the banquet board was spread, the danger was materially lessened. But those were the Middle Ages, and this is the nineteenth century, and it seems very odd to retain a Middle-Age practice in a time when that practice becomes absurd.

I speak of this not because I believe that the Turk will ever change in this respect, but because the fact is a clue to his present helpless if not hopeless condition. If Turkey could be persuaded to emancipate her women, to allow them to drop their veils and enter society as freely as the men do, the manners and customs of the country, its moral and intellectual tone, would be elevated in a twinkling, for it is an unrepealable law that a man's world is a defective world, that a woman's world is a narrow

world, but that a world in which men and women commingle on equal terms and with a community of interests, is the only world that is fit to live in.

A woman in Anatolia will bestride a horse as a man does. In many instances she has the bifurcated garment which is open to the objection of being stigmatized as trousers. If she has on an ordinary skirt, she is not squeamish about showing her ankles, or lifting her dress still higher, but when you pass her on the road, she will either draw her veil over her face, or turn to the wall until you are pretty well out of sight. This struck me as very curious, and I naturally supposed that her face must be too beautiful for the eyes of a stranger to behold, but one or two glimpses which I accidentally caught proved conclusively that, in those particular instances at least, there was no danger of exciting the covetousness of anyone. It is only a custom, partly a religious custom, but one which operates to the detriment of a whole nation.

And now, if you please, I will come out of the clairvoyant condition into which I have fallen, and devote my attention to more serious matters.



## CHAPTER X.

### ARARAT.

“ONE thing we must do, or die,” I said to Mr. Whitman a few days before we left Erzeroom.

“Then let us do it, for the other horn of the dilemma is not pleasant to contemplate,” was the quick reply.

“We must have a cook of our own,” I continued. “Turkish cooking is well enough for cast-iron stomachs, but I happen not to have the article, and to tell the truth I am literally starving.”

This was a very necessary step to take, and it was evident that the sooner it was taken the better. I had begun to lose flesh, and it looked as though I should ultimately lose everything except my bare skeleton unless I resorted to some heroic measure.

The Turk is one of the most hospitable creatures in the world, but what he likes I can't eat.

His appetite is vigorous, but it is not fastidious. Here, as everywhere else, he reminds me of his nomadic past. The chicken that is clucking in the yard at five o'clock in the afternoon is being made into a fricassee at six. A sheep—sometimes miscalled a lamb—is killed, and within two hours the chops are on the table. He is also fond of honey, and one of the dinner courses is sure to be so sweet that the digestive organs of an American stop working in their surprise that it can seem palatable. I would go to the table, take a plate of soup, or a morsel of meat, and then retire to my room to meditate, to make a few unpleasant remarks, or to try the effect of mind cure on hunger. It was impossible to go on in that way, for hard work demands good food, and so Mr. Whitman and I took counsel together.

The Russian Consul happened in one day, and hearing of our dilemma offered to lend us his second cook, Migirditch. This offer was graciously made and eagerly accepted. Migirditch was an Armenian, as his name implies, and he served our purpose admirably. After our early breakfast, consisting of next to nothing, he would pack his oranges, lemons, sardines, and crackers in his saddle-bags, with such other odds and ends as he could pick up,

and with only a halter for bridle, and without a saddle, dash on in the most reckless fashion to the village indicated for lunch. By the time we got there he had everything in readiness. A simple-minded fellow, stalwart, but with an air of caution, not to say suspicion, he did what he could for our comfort, and we were extremely grateful for his services and his fidelity.

While in Erzeroom, I feared that my appetite was gone for good. It seemed to me that I should never eat again. But I discovered my mistake when the British Consul, Mr. Graves, brought an invitation from his lovely wife to lunch with them. It was a notable experience. "Excuse me," I said, "if I stare at you, for this all seems like a dream. I have not seen a woman for so long a time that I am positively embarrassed." Then as we sat at table, my old appetite came back with renewed energy. I apologized two or three times, but nevertheless, like *Oliver Twist*, held out my plate for more. It was a goodly company, consisting of Graves, his wife, and young Bergholz, the American Consul, to whom I afterwards became indebted for many favors, and it was a wonderful refreshment to listen to my native tongue and hear the latest news from England and from home. I had the same experience



afterward when I spent part of an afternoon in the home of a missionary, Reverend Mr. Chambers.

Why did I feel so much at home there, and why so much of a stranger elsewhere? The matter is worth thinking about; it is very suggestive. It must have been partly the consequence of racial affinity. At least I think so now as I look back on it. I was perfectly peaceful as I sat in the easy-chair, sipping a cup of tea and flitting from one subject to another, from Erzeroom to Boston, from the Turks to a Thanksgiving dinner. People of the same race have a standpoint in common from which they observe life, and there are certain generic ideas which they all enjoy, and which makes them feel more or less at home with each other.

Or possibly religion may have had something to do with it. The men in a mosque can understand each other, and so can the men in a church, but what happens when the mosque men and the church men are thrown together? They cannot see things alike, try as they will. They may be polite, courteous, anxious to please each other, and willing to do everything in their power to that end, but yet there is a subtle barrier which separates, instead of a community of feeling which unites. I don't

think I am a bigot. On the contrary, I am rather liberal in my religious notions. I have a conviction that a Mohammedan who lives according to his light is as sure of getting to heaven as I am. Indeed, I have always regarded myself as cosmopolitan in these matters, but somehow I felt more comfortable in the house of a European or American than in the house of a Turk.

Or, again, it may be that there was a subtle embarrassment arising from the character of my mission. I think, on the whole, that the solution of the problem may be found just there. Because of my sympathies with the Armenians I was more or less isolated. My heart went out continually towards the people who had suffered such never-to-be-described disasters, and all the rest of the little company naturally looked upon me with a degree of suspicion. I was bound to tell the truth as I saw it, and no one agreed with me as to what was the truth. The Turks would have been glad to have me take a different view of the subject, but that could not be thought of, and when a man is constantly writing disagreeable facts, and insisting on saying what his friends regard as a misrepresentation, he finds himself awkwardly situated. So when I was with an

American or English consul, or with a missionary, I breathed more freely.

I had a very pleasant talk with Sirry Bey on this subject. He is a gentleman who wanted me to tell the truth, but also wanted me to see the truth as he saw it. I certainly could not blame him for that.

“You are not doing the Turks justice,” he said; “but you are doing more than justice to the Armenians.”

“I should be sorry,” I replied, “to err in either direction, but who says I am misrepresenting the case?”

“That is my personal judgment,” he answered, “and the judgment of others with whom I have talked.”

Then I adopted the Socratic method, and said :

“Pray tell me what I am here for?”

“To look into the Armenian question,” he replied.

“But how to look into it?” I queried. “With my own eyes, or with some one else’s? Am I to collate opinions, or am I to form them personally?”

“Undoubtedly to use your own judgment,” he frankly answered; “but at the same time to see that what you state is borne out by the facts.”



“Bravely said,” I continued, “and the only thing for us to do is to agree to differ. I am bound to write what I think, otherwise it would have been better not to come. That, as I understand it, is what the Sultan expects me to do, and what Mr. Bennett expects me to do, and though I say things not pleasant to hear, still, if I say them on my honor, that is all that can be demanded.”

The gentlemen of our party will not accept a quarter of the criticisms of the Turk in this book. Why should they? A great many of my deductions they will oppose, and a great many of my statements they will deny. I cannot help making them, and they cannot help denying them. Nobody, therefore, is to blame. But enough of this.

One morning during the latter part of our stay in Erzerum I heard the following dialogue:

“It cannot be done.”

“Then we must choose another route.”

“That will be a great disappointment to the Doctor and Mr. Whitman.”

“Perhaps, but it can't be helped.”

When Mr. Whitman came in I asked what was on the carpet.

“We positively cannot go to Van,” he replied. “It is impossible.”

“But it must be made possible,” I answered.

“Perhaps; but how? The news is very discouraging. The mail ponies have not been able to make their way for five days. We shall have to go by sledge, since Sirry Bey is ill, and—well, you can see for yourself that the route is impracticable.”

I did see it, but was unwilling to confess it. Mr. Whitman was also anxious to go to Van, but he was more cautious than I.

This omission will never cease to give me regret. But I was in a peculiar position, and what could I do? Van was my *ultima thule*. It was the most dangerous city because it was close to the Persian border, and was almost literally honeycombed by Armenian revolutionists. If there is any trouble in the future, Van is more than likely to furnish the occasion for it. All along the line of my travels I had heard strange stories, perhaps exaggerated, and I was eager to look at the situation with my own eyes. I had been told by Turks and Armenians that one of our missionaries there, Dr. Raynolds, had been in active co-operation with the government, the Vali and he working together, for the suppression of an uprising.

But I was assured that even if we succeeded in getting there we might be snowed in for an

indefinite period, because the road thence to Bitlis is not much travelled in winter, and the snow-drifts would almost certainly block our way.

Moreover, there was at one time some uncertainty whether we should get into the interior at all, in which case the mission would prove a failure. An attempt—a very vigorous attempt—was made to bend the line of travel westward towards Erzingan and Sivas. That part of the country would have been exceedingly interesting without doubt, but it would not serve the purpose I had in view. I was especially desirous to get into the land of the Kurds, for during the massacres they had been more barbarous than barbarism itself, and, incidentally, I wanted to see the Hamidieh regiments on their native soil. I therefore strongly set my face against the Erzingan route, and Mr. Whitman ably and diplomatically backed me in this. The contest lasted for several days, some insisting on going by the western route, and Whitman and I holding out for Van, or, in case of too much snow, for Bitlis, and of course we had our way in the end. Bitlis was the point agreed upon, and then came the question as to the route.

The path over the mountain was not to be



thought of, but Rauff Pacha took great pains to get accurate information about the roads, and it was thought well to go eastward until within a few hours of Ararat, and then strike to the southward, skirting the shore of Lake Van, and so on to Bitlis. The way would be difficult; the khans would be of the worst possible description; but we were determined to find a path along some spoke of the wheel and get as near to the hub as possible. Sirry Bey, who was an invalid, and with whom we had a long discussion, agreed that if he found it impossible to keep pace with us we were to push on without him, and await his arrival in some convenient city or village. So everything was at last amicably arranged, and we made eager preparations to leave Erzeroom.

It is not often that anything of a hilarious nature happens on such a trip as this, but on one occasion I had a stitch in my side caused by excessive laughter. Whether these good Turks thought me a stick of brittle candy that might easily get broken, or whether their notion was that I had reached the age of decrepitude, I don't know. Whitman in one pannier, and I in the other! Well, when the proposition was made, I hesitated a moment, so astounded that it was impossible to express

myself. Certain forms of speech, more remarkable for their strength than their beauty, came into my mind, and near leaping from my tongue's tip; but I put a strong curb bit in my mouth, and was able to restrain myself.

In a pannier indeed! My pride and my self-conceit were shocked. I did not consider myself so antediluvian that I needed to journey through Anatolia in a wicker basket, and moreover, I had ridden more miles on horseback in my life than any Turk in the party. In other days I had broken horses to the saddle, and even a bucking brute had not been able to throw me over his head when his hind feet were in the air, or over his tail when he stood up as erect as a telegraph pole. And so they wanted to stow me away in a pannier! I would show them that I could climb a steep and slide down the other side with the best of them, so I politely declined the invitation, and requested Rushdi Bey to buy me the best horse he could find. The affair was closed when a beautiful and spirited white Anatolian beast was brought for my approval, and after examining his legs and noting his rather wild eye, I said: "He will do." I had an opportunity after that to show that an American can make even a Turk work hard to keep up with him. I felt

that the national honor was at stake, and that it had to be vindicated even if I broke my neck, which I came very near doing several times.

The incidents of this part of the journey I recall with a good deal of pleasure, partly because we traversed a territory whose villages are not on any map that I can find, and are not mentioned in the guide-book. In at least six of these villages we were told that no Europeans had ever before been seen. Still another reason is that we came into personal relations with the best horsemen and until a recent date the most restless and discontented people in the Empire, namely—the Kurds.

“Where is Egri Dagh?” I asked our driver on the afternoon of the second day.

“You will see it to-morrow, if the weather is clear,” he replied.

Now Egri Dagh is the Turkish name of Mount Ararat. To say that I longed with an inexpressible longing to see the giant who, like Atlas, held the world on his shoulders, is but a feeble expression of my feelings. It has always seemed to me like the pivot on which the history of three thousand years swings. The Persian looks at it and calls it “Kuh-i-nuh,” or Noah’s Mountain; the Anatolian gazes with reverence



on its towering summit, and dubs it "Egri Dagh," or Painful Mountain; the Christian views it with profound emotions, for it is associated in his mind with great events which have to do with human progress.

He recalls the fact that in the Scriptures mountains have played an important part. It was on the top of Mt. Sinai that the Eternal Voice spoke in a thunderous whisper which crystallized into the Ten Commandments; it was to Mt. Moriah that Abraham took Isaac his son that he might offer him as a sacrifice; it was from the top of Mt. Pisgah that Moses was permitted to see the promised land whose borders he would never cross; it was on the top of Mt. Carmel that Elijah defied the prophets of Baal who declared that they could bring fire from heaven, and then performed his own notable miracle in the name of the true God; it was to Mt. Tabor that Jesus and His disciples retired when that wondrous scene of the Transfiguration took place; it was the Mount of Olives and Mount Calvary that witnessed the tragedy in the life of Christ. It is not strange, therefore, that with such facts crowding my mind I was exceedingly eager to catch a glimpse of mighty Ararat.

We had climbed a terrible steep, which led

## 212 Through Armenia on Horseback

us close to the stars, and on reaching the summit I cried, "Where is it?"

The driver pointed with his whip, and then shook his head. "There! but the clouds," said he.

I was to be disappointed after all, and a feeling of great depression stole over me. The day was unpropitious. From early morning the landscape had been covered with a thick haze, and even the mountains ten miles away were invisible. For half an hour I nursed my regret, taking no interest in anything, when I heard a cheery voice crying, "Look, look!"

And there in the near distance was Ararat! The heavy clouds had suddenly parted as though invisible hands had drawn the curtain aside. I gazed like one entranced. The unexpected had happened. The revulsion from the disappointment of half an hour before brought tears to my eyes. Seventeen thousand feet the giant towered, and made the rest of the landscape look as though it were peopled by a race of pigmies. For ten minutes I looked and looked, feasting my soul on the magnificent spectacle, and then a veil dropped down which became thicker and thicker until the great mountain disappeared from view. "I have seen it!" I said to my soul, and was

satisfied and grateful. Those ten minutes occupy a very prominent place in my memory, for I never saw that summit again. We were within range of it for twenty-four hours after that, but the sky frowned and the clouds were thick.

If I remember aright, the first Kurdish village we visited was Tahir. When we were close to it, I said to Mr. Whitman: "Come now, there are limits to human endurance, and I draw the line right here. It is utterly out of the question to spend the night in such a filthy hole as this. Can't we drive on?"

And if you could see the place, you would understand the feeling of absolute horror which possessed me. We were all tired out, not only physically but mentally, for our nerves had been strained to their utmost. If we could have had a sweet night's rest after each day's work, a fair supper and a good bed, we could have laughed at the day's task, but to—well, let me tell you about it.

People in Anatolia reckon the population of a village by the number of houses, never by the number of individuals. There were perhaps fifty houses—but hold! why do I say houses? Would you speak of houses if you spoke of a village of American Indians? There



were fifty structures, more or less, situated every which way, with a corkscrew path leading by them. They were made of rough stone, or blocks of mud, one story high, and half the interior was for the cattle while the other half was devoted to humanity. The front door was low, as usual, not high enough for you to enter without stooping, and in front of it was a bog of manure through which you had to wade ankle-deep in order to cross the threshold. There was only one room, with divans covered with dirty rags all round the sides. The proprietor squatted on one of these, surrounded by four or five magnates, also squatting. He offered us food, but at first I politely declined. When, however, he grew mournful because I had not accorded with the custom of hospitality, I begged his pardon, and ate a bit of bread with salt on it, and took a spoonful of his sour milk. That satisfied him and we were then permitted to finish the dish which Migirditch had prepared. The room was without ventilation, for the Oriental, who has all the air in creation to breathe when out of doors, is careful not to allow any more of it than he can help to penetrate his living-room. He likes to sleep in a hermetically sealed box.

I presented our host, during one part of the



A KURDISH MERCHANT.





interview, with my card, which he doubled up and put carefully into his cigarette case. He did not know what it meant, but when someone told him afterwards that if a European gave his card it was the same as a Kurd offering his horse, he was somewhat elated.

During the evening Mr. Whitman passed around a box of sweetmeats, and after that these untutored creatures took us to their hearts. One of them wanted to give us his horse, and another brought a bearskin which he insisted that Mr. Whitman should take, because, as he said, "I killed him myself." It seems, the bear was prowling about one night, and came across the grave of our host's brother, not ten rods off. The hungry creature had scarce begun to dig the earth away when he was discovered. A tussle followed,—my impression is that it was a hand-to-claw fight, the hand having the advantage of a long dirk,—and Bruin surrendered unconditionally.

We somehow managed to sleep, though rather restlessly on my part, for I have never yet been able to accustom myself to the meagre accommodations of such a primitive place.

Now it would not be fair to call these people savages, and yet, when you come to think of

it, why not? They live in huts, and they live in filth which is profound and various beyond description. They have none of the appurtenances of civilization, none of the conveniences of the household which the humblest and poorest family in America would consider absolutely necessary, and they dress in the fantastic fashion of the nomads of two thousand years ago. They cannot read or write, and have to hire someone to perform this service for them. They are, so far as I can see, as thoroughly primitive in their habits as the cave-dwellers of the earliest historic days. All this is true of nine out of every ten villages which you pass when you penetrate the interior. To call the people civilized would be a misuse of terms. They are practically savages, and they live the life of savages. They eat with their fingers, and their women work in the field like men. They have all the peculiarities of a race which has never yet been in touch with modern times or modern thought. They are slovenly, easy-going, generally good-natured, but they always have either a revolver or a knife within reach, and presumably these weapons are for use. For that matter, the only things I found in the interior of Anatolia which represented civilization were the sword,

the rifle, and the pistol. All the rest is prehistoric.

We had one curious experience on the journey to Bitlis which is possibly worth recording as an evidence of the difficulties to be encountered in this far-off region. We had just managed to ford a river, the water coming into our sledges and rendering our position uncomfortable, when word was sent round that the road ahead was so blocked as to be impassable. As we were miles from the village where we were to spend the night, the outlook was anything but pleasant.

"If the road is blocked, what are we to do?" I asked.

"We are compelled to make a road for ourselves over the mountain," was the reply.

"What! Over that mountain yonder?"

"Precisely," was the answer.

What must be done must be done, and so we started. The wind blew briskly, and the cold was intense. It is not an easy job to force a path through piled-up drifts on a steep ascent, but there were six cavalymen ahead to trample the snow down. Now and again our horses were winded, for they were up to their knees, and we had to stop a bit to give them a rest. The scenery was magnificent,



but I was not in a state of mind to enjoy it, for the afternoon had begun its trip towards sundown, and I did not like the outlook. I can stand a reasonable amount of cold, but I object to being frozen to death. However, I lighted a fresh cigar, and settled back in my seat, trying to resign myself to the inevitable. Up we went, hour after hour, but the summit, like the horizon, appeared to be receding.

“Are you chilly?” I asked Mr. Whitman.

“I am a chunk of ice,” was the reply.

“How far to the top?” I yelled to the sledge ahead.

“A couple of miles,” was the answer; “but they are bad miles.”

It was not necessary to call them bad, for we were all aware of that fact.

“Hullo! Stuck, are we?”

“No, but the trace of one of the horses has broken. It will be mended in five minutes. There is plenty of rope somewhere in the sledge.” This from Hermann.

I don't remember what I said about the average Anatolian harness, and if I did I should probably not repeat it here. The driver patched up the damage, then chirruped to his horses, and we were off once more.

What with mending broken straps, stopping

to let the horses catch their breath, and jumping out to lighten the sledge through a drift, the afternoon was passing rapidly, but in due time we were on the summit, and then began the descent. We nearly tipped over two or three times, but these were mere details, not worth minding. Indeed, there was something ludicrous in the scene when Mr. Whitman and I were both on our feet, leaning half out of the sledge, which was at an angle of about sixty degrees, and trying to keep it on its runners. He puffed away at his pipe, and I at my cigar, and we both wondered how long it would take to dig us out of that snow-bank fifty feet below the edge of the ravine along which we were going. Not a mishap occurred, however, and just as the shadows were gathering we half galloped down the last steep to the little Circassian village, whose headman gave us a warm welcome. To be sure, it was a stable in which we were to rest, but we had been installed like other cattle so many times that we were quite satisfied with our quarters.

First came coffee, then the everlasting cigarette, then a tumbler of tea, and finally a long talk through our dragoman with the magnates. Tall fellows, these Circassians; swarthy, but handsome as a splendid animal is handsome,

and, while we were under their roof, our protectors against all comers.

The Circassians are a peculiar people, very intelligent, very courteous, but given, so I am told, to theft. The only thing they have in common with the Turk is religion, and as religion is not very burdensome anywhere in Anatolia, the relation between the two is not close. The Circassian is not a specially loyal subject of the Empire. He must be kept well in hand all the while, or there will be trouble. He came down from the Caucasus because the oppressive rule of Russia was too much for him. He is a brave and headstrong fellow, but, like all other Orientals, he bore an incredible amount of ill-usage before he decided to leave the Czar. The Turkish government encouraged him to emigrate, mostly because he is a follower of the Prophet, and it made a good many promises which it never kept. He is having rather a hard time, for the Turk and he do not get on well together, and in case of trouble there is a suspicion that he cannot be fully relied upon. My personal experiences with him, however, have always been pleasant. He is a picturesque creature, dignified, serious, willing to talk, and, better than that, he has something to say.



We were not badly bestowed that night, and when we had eaten every chop that Migirditch had prepared, we took to our beds and were soon asleep.

And so the days passed until at last we arrived at Bitlis, where we stayed for a few days in the government house, whose walls were not yet dry and were suggestive of rheumatism. I had a big fire built, kept it going all day, had my camp-bed close to the stove, and for four nights dropped into dreamland to the music of the roaring Tigris, which runs through the city. A more tired, or a more satisfied fellow than I was when it stole over me that I had reached the hub of the wheel, that I was actually in that region where the massacres had displayed themselves in their most lurid horror, could not be found on this round planet. I was really in Bitlis, and that fact repaid me a thousand times for all the dangers and hardships of the journey. For a month I had looked forward to that consummation so devoutly to be wished, and there I was, in the quaintest and filthiest city conceivable, and in a position to look the Armenian question in the face.

## CHAPTER XI.

### HAMIDIEHS AND MASSACRES.

WE found Bitlis a very peculiar and an uninteresting city. It occupies a strategical position, so far as military operations are concerned, and could be easily defended against attack. Occupying three hills, with the infant Tigris and another mountain torrent roaring through the valley, it could resist almost any hostile force. It is picturesque, with its houses climbing the hillsides, and inexpressibly dirty. It is probably the dirtiest city this side of Persian territory, so dirty that in the comparison Erzeroom seemed a veritable Paris. The streets are abominably paved, and so crooked that you lose yourself within ten minutes after leaving your lodgings. There are about thirty-five thousand inhabitants, including a large garrison of soldiers, and neither a chemist's shop nor a doctor in the place. Nor is there a carriage or any wheeled vehi-

cle to be seen, and he who wanders about must either go on foot or in the saddle. We spent only four days there, but saw nothing to occupy our attention. True, there is an old castle which legend says is on the site of a fortress made by Alexander the Great, and on its walls are a few Arabic inscriptions which seem to proclaim its origin, but with these exceptions there is very little to excite the curiosity of the traveller.

The American missionaries have founded a school for boys and girls, and are working for the good of the people against the odds of the government. The authorities are in deadly opposition to missionary work, which is hampered and restricted in every possible way. The Turks always insist that the missionary is at heart a revolutionist, and they are always in search of a peg on which to hang some charge.

How many Armenians there are in Bitlis, no one knows, and no one can guess, but that they are in a wretched condition, timorous, nervous, suspicious, on account of the attitude of the civil authorities, is seen at a glance. They have had a frightful experience: their houses have been plundered by the Kurds, they are impoverished and well-nigh hopeless.



Why should they not be hopeless? When an Armenian has built up a business, acquired a good stock in trade and won the good-will of many customers, it is not agreeable to be driven out by some ferocious Kurd who simply enters the door, weapon in hand, claims the whole property as his own, and thereafter does business on the basis of stolen goods. This I was told had happened more than once, and I have the utmost confidence in the statement.

The relation of the Armenians to their neighbors, or rather their victors, is worse in the region around Bitlis than in most other parts of the country. The reason is that they have no rights which any Kurd is bound to respect, and throughout the length and breadth of Kurdistan there is a hopelessness which drives the onlooker to despair.

Almost immediately after leaving Erzeroom, that is to say, when we got to the other side of the range of mountains on the south, we came upon and were welcomed by battalions of the Hamidieh regiments, and I had somewhat large opportunities to make a study of them. My curiosity was vastly excited about them long before I started on the journey, and I was only too glad to look at the men and the problem with my own eyes. There are at

present between fifty and sixty regiments of these Hamidiehs, and the number is likely to be increased, for the Kurds are very enthusiastic at the action of the Sultan, and more than proud to wear a uniform.

It was in 1891, I think, that the movement took shape. It was a shrewd bit of finesse on the part of his Majesty, but it was not unattended with danger. Whether he knew it or not, he forged a two-edged sword, and no one can tell which edge may be used, the one for him or the other against him.

His object was dual. In the first place, he wanted to bring the whole Kurdish population into closer relations with Yildiz. They are an open-handed, dashing, daring folk, who have always found restraint irksome—an out-of-door folk, with a boundless love of adventure, happier on horseback, and more at home there, than anywhere else. They have never been loyal, have given the home government a good deal of trouble and anxiety, and on more than one occasion it has been necessary to send troops against them and to spill large quantities of blood. They are a devil-may-care race, with very little of the religious element in their natures, and careless both of their own lives and the lives of others; a wild, untamed, semi-

savage horde, who know absolutely nothing about what we call civilization.

They could not be reached, nor could their attention be attracted by anything else than an appeal to their military instincts. They love a gun, a sword, a dagger, and are exceedingly reckless in the use of these weapons, especially when the victim is unarmed. They have none of the finer instincts of the soldier, but are filled to the chin with a kind of good-nature coupled with brutality. Murder has not been regarded as much of a crime, for they have inherited a bloodthirsty nature from their ancestors, who lived as robber barons and had strongholds on every hilltop. If the man in their way happened to be an Armenian, and especially if he had valuables on his person, they made quick work with him, and did not suffer from any compunctions whatever.

The Sultan approached them, therefore, on the side where they were weakest, and his promises inflamed them with enthusiasm. Representative Kurds visited Constantinople, and were graciously received by his Majesty. Numerous decorations were distributed, and then the plan, which is said to have originated with Sekki Pacha, was carefully explained.

They were invited to organize the able-bod-



ied men in the various villages into regiments of cavalry. In a word, they were to be uniformed, armed, and drilled, and thus become a component part of the grand Turkish army. One regiment every year would visit Constantinople as guardians of the city, which would give them prestige.

The proposition was eagerly accepted, and the work began at once, and has ever since been pursued with vigor. All at once dissatisfaction and discontent ceased from out the land, and a wild enthusiasm for the Sultan spread over hill and valley. Theretofore they were merely guerrillas, defying all law; now they were to be regular soldiers. As one of them said to me: "The Sultan's friends are my friends, and his enemies are my enemies." That state of feeling exists at the present moment. There are no people in the Empire more loyal, apparently, than these Hamidieh regiments. I have sometimes thought that they were too loyal, that they protested too much, that such a hot flame cannot last, but in that matter my opinion has no weight.

The strategy of the Sultan was thus far successful. He had done his work with incomparable tact and skill. He had shown himself as able a statesman in dealing with an exceed-

ingly difficult internal problem as Europe acknowledges him to be in manipulating the Powers. He saw at a glance the right thing to do, and he did it at once.

Now again. The Sultan has grave cause for fearing the encroachments of Russia. Russia is his bitterest and most implacable enemy, not that Russia hates the Turk as an individual, but as a property owner. The land of the Turk is coveted by Russia, and both the Czar and the Sultan know that the fates have decided in favor of Russia and that when the time is ripe, Russian troops will occupy the shores of the Sea of Marmora and of the Mediterranean. Nothing is lacking for the accomplishment of that fixed purpose except the opportunity, and that may make itself manifest at any moment. When it does come, it will not be allowed to slip from the grasp of the Bear.

Kurdistan is not far from the Russian border. One must keep a sharp eye on his frontier in these days. When a giant is striding your way, and wants what you possess, you must either be prepared to meet him, or surrender will be inevitable. But how can he be met? A large dependence can be placed on the European Powers, but that is not enough.

So long as these Powers can be kept in suspicious mood—suspicious of each other—all will go well. If they should come to an agreement as to a division of the spoils, the crack of doom for Turkey would be heard.

In Southern Russia are the Cossacks with their spears—savages, it is true, but for that reason all the better soldiers. They fight best when they are filled with vodki, and vodki is plentiful in Russia. Bravely led, they do deeds of prowess, and so they constitute a very important arm of the military service. In case of trouble, they would pour over Kurdistan like a mountain torrent in spring, and carry destruction and victory throughout the land.

The Armenians might side with Russia, therefore they are better out of the way, or so crippled that their influence would not be felt. With sixty thousand Hamidieh soldiers properly equipped and the Armenians impoverished, the chances of war would have a brighter look. That fight is sure to come, but when, no man can tell. And when it comes Turkey will tremble in the balance.

The work of enlisting and drilling is still going on. All the Kurds are encouraged to enroll themselves, and they are doing so with



such eagerness that in many cases they provide their own arms and ammunition. They are in their element, are in favor at Yildiz, and have full swing.

I have seen thousands of these soldiers. As many as five hundred of them have met us on our entrance into a town and accompanied us on our departure. They present a stirring spectacle as they ride at breakneck speed over the plains, brandishing their spears in mimic warfare, firing their guns in the most reckless fashion, and filling the air with bullets. They closely resemble our American Indians in their generally untamed appearance. That a majority of them are not yet real soldiers goes without saying; whether they can ever be whipped into shape as effective troops against a strong enemy remains to be seen.

Their commandant is Sekki Pacha, whose headquarters are at Erzingan. This man is more than popular, and can do with his regiments pretty much as he pleases. He keeps his influence by allowing them enormous privileges; by overlooking their peccadillos and by not maintaining an irksome discipline. The Hamidieh soldier is practically monarch of all he surveys. He was aforetime the



SEKKI PACHA AND HIS STAFF.





despot of the country, but since his enlistment he is doubly so, not even being amenable to the courts for offences which deserve a sure and severe punishment. There is no law which this soldier is bound to respect. He has boundless licence and does what he will with impunity. The theory is that either a civil or a military court holds him to account for his deeds, but the military court is more or less of a farce, and the civil court is entirely a farce. If he is arrested for theft, or even for murder, the long and strong arm of Sekki Pacha is stretched out for his protection, and the hocus-pocus of an acquittal is successfully invoked. If he steals from a Turk, the chances are against his being punished, and if he steals from an Armenian, he simply laughs in his sleeve when threatened with the law. He is petted, flattered, pampered.

I repeat that these Kurds have never been loyal for long. They are loyal now because it pays them in a variety of ways to be so. They are to all intents and purposes mercenaries, and they will retain their loyalty as long, and only as long, as they can reap advantage. They are by no means as reliable as the Turkish troops, and no one can safely predict that they will stand by the Sultan in an emergency.

They did well in the late war with Greece, but there was no opportunity to show their mettle.

I give an opinion on this subject with a deal of diffidence because I am not at all learned in military science. But I had large opportunities for study and observation. I saw these troops day after day, and sometimes all day. I was rather well acquainted with the past history of the Kurds, and knew something of their temperament and the general plan of their lives. This gave me, as a layman, or, if you like the word better, as a tourist, a fair vantage-ground from which to see the drift of things and to form conclusions.

My impression is that these Hamidieh regiments in their present environment are a very uncertain factor in the problem of Turkey's future. The dream of their lives has been realized, that is to say, they are equipped, armed, and in some small degree disciplined. At their head is a man in the favor of the Sultan. They follow him blindly, and in return he protects them against all comers, even against the punishment due to their crimes. He overrides the civil courts, and is as thorough an autocrat as can easily be found.

Suppose the old habit of disloyalty, of reckless indifference to the home government, of

defiance to orders from headquarters should return. In such a country as Turkey anything is likely to happen, and this return to old ways is not merely a possibility but a probability. As long as they can have all they want, as long as they are the despots of that section by imperial authority they will naturally be content. But when the ardor of their enthusiasm cools, when they shall be required to do what they don't want to do, what then? That time is surely coming, and nobody can tell what incident or accident will bring that contingency to the front. They are naturally an independent, restive people, with very large ideas of their own rights, and very small ideas of the rights of others. There is nothing in any part of Turkey which corresponds to our definition of patriotism, and least of all among the Kurds.

Heretofore, when they have engaged in an outbreak, they have been a mere guerrilla band, not well armed and poorly drilled. But now, if they should become eruptive they would be fully equipped, and well led. It is not easy to conceive of a defection on the part of Sekki Pacha, for his position is one of great influence in the Empire, and if rumor speaks true, he has very rare opportunities to acquire



wealth. If such defection should occur, however, from any cause whatever, he would have a very considerable army at his beck and call, men who have fought many times for the accomplishment of a private end, and who would be quite capable of doing the same thing again.

I do not see how I can be very far wrong, therefore, in saying that while it was a shrewd move to organize these discontented Kurds into regiments, the experiment may be looked at from two opposite standpoints. To-day the experiment works well, but when you have to deal with the fickle Kurds, you cannot tell what may happen to-morrow.

Now let me address myself to another matter. While at Bitlis I took special pains to discover the condition of the Armenian population, which is large. I saw Turks, missionaries, consuls, Mohammedan priests, Kurdish officers, shopkeepers, and indeed everyone from whom information might be obtained. My conclusions were not very inspiring. A dense fog of depression had settled on the city. The aggressors did not care to talk on the subject, and the victims were too much frightened to say anything. The Armenians have been most abominably plundered, and they must begin life all over again, for there is clearly no re-

dress in the courts, and if they make serious complaint, other hardships are likely to befall them. They are in bad case, for there is a garrison in the city, and a garrison always dominates public opinion where the people are ignorant. Public opinion is in a couchant attitude, ready at any moment to spring on an Armenian, and to condone the offence when one of them is killed.

I never in my life had so much trouble as Bitlis gave me in sifting evidence. Of course I frankly referred to the massacres, and did not conceal the fact that I sought an opportunity to see things in the right light. If the Armenians were at fault in Bitlis, as I was convinced they were in Trebizond, and as I do not believe they were in Biredjik or Aintab or Oorfa, I wanted to know it. I said to my informants that the truth was the best for all of us, and the sooner we got at it the better. But I soon found myself in the midst of confusion worse confounded, and as a good illustration of the difficulties in the way of getting at anything which is wholly reliable, I will give some details.

My first interview was with a Turk, an official, a man who was personally acquainted with all the facts of the case, who expressed a de-

sire to converse about the massacres and who brought with him an armful of official documents. I will not give his name because I afterward saw many witnesses, and it would be embarrassing if it were known that they had talked with me in any confidential way.

When we were closeted with this official, certain leading questions were put to him in what I think was a tactful fashion ; but he was on the alert for pitfalls, and did not stumble. He had his own story to tell, and though he undoubtedly knew a great many things which would conflict with that story, he very adroitly avoided them. It was as fine an instance of special pleading as I have ever listened to. He knew that he was not telling the whole truth, I knew that he was not telling it, and he knew that I knew that he was not telling it, but there were the documents from which he read extracts in answer to questions, and so what could be done ?

When at last I discovered that he and I were merely fencing with each other, and that he was an expert in that business, I said to him :

“ My dear sir, I would like to have you tell me how this trouble began.”

“ And that is precisely what I have come to do,” was the courteous reply ; for the Turk is



always polite and seldom exhibits anything like impatience. As a general thing he is unruffled, calm, and deliberate under circumstances which would irritate a Western man, and bring the blood to his cheeks.

“You are acquainted with all the facts, undoubtedly?” I suggested.

“I think so,” was the reply; “and I willingly place them at your service.”

“You can tell me what kind of a report of the affair was sent to Constantinople?”

“Assuredly,” he answered. “And that report” he added, “can be easily verified if you will take the trouble to do so. Our only purpose was to tell the plain truth, and to put the blame where it belongs.”

“Precisely,” I said, “and as I also would like to know whom to hold responsible, I regard it as a great privilege to hear the account from the lips of a man who has looked at the subject in an impartial and judicial way.”

“It was on a Friday,” he said, “and the mosque was full of worshippers. There had been no friction between the Armenians and the Mohammedans, and no reason to suspect an uprising. Everything was quiet and peaceful, so far as could be ascertained. During the solemn service, loud voices were heard

on the outside, and it was evident that something alarming was on foot. Threats to kill the worshippers created a panic."

"And these threats?" I asked.

"Were made," he answered, "by a crowd of excited Armenians who had gathered at the mosque doors."

"But the Armenians do not carry arms," I suggested, "and men on the outside with nothing but their fists were not a match for men inside with deadly weapons in their belts."

"The worshippers were not armed," he asserted, "but the Armenians had in some mysterious way obtained pistols."

"That seems very odd," I remarked. "Those who always carry arms were without them, and those who never carry arms had pistols and guns."

"Yes," he replied, "it seems odd, perhaps, but it was nevertheless true on that occasion. We were in the midst of a revolt, and matters looked very serious."

"Well, that is exceedingly interesting," I said. "What was the upshot of the matter?"

"What it would naturally be under the circumstances," he replied. "The men in the mosque rushed out on hearing the noise and saw at once what it all meant."

“ And what was that ? ” I asked.

“ That the Armenians were bent on massacre.”

“ And then ? ”

“ Well, the conflict began. The Moham-medans rushed on the Armenians in a hand-to-hand fight, and wrested their pistols from them. During the so-called massacre which followed, a large number of Turks were killed and wounded.”

“ Do you know how many ? ” I asked.

“ Certainly ; the number is given here in this official document. There were thirty-nine Turks killed outright, and one hundred and fifty wounded. Those figures are correct.”

“ And how many Armenians ? ” I asked.

He looked at the official papers again, and replied, “ One hundred and forty.”

“ How long did the massacre last ? ” I asked.

“ Not longer than fifteen or twenty minutes,” he replied.

“ That did not give much time for the wholesale plundering of which we heard in America.”

“ So far as I can learn,” he answered, “ only one house in the city was plundered.”

That is the account of the affair which was sent to Yildiz, and that story contains all that



the Sultan has any means of knowing about it. It is a most remarkable story, and the discrepancies are as thick as leaves in Valambrosa. On the face of it, it cannot be true, and before a jury it would have hardly any weight as evidence. It is extremely important, however, because it is probably a fair sample of the official representation of the occurrences of the last few years. That it is a misrepresentation, so much so that it can fairly be called a fabrication, becomes clear when you look at it a second time.

The Turks in the mosque had no weapons ! Then it must have been the first time in their lives that they left them at home. The Armenians were fully armed ! That is also very strange, too strange to be accepted without the strongest proof. It is a prison offence to carry a pistol without a permit, and no Armenian gets a permit. The unarmed Turks wrestled with men who had revolvers, secured the revolvers, and then turned and shot the Armenians ! It is incredible that an Armenian who had the courage to engage in a rebellion, and who had armed himself with that purpose, should allow a Turk to get possession of his weapon when he could easily have shot him instead. There is a strong odor of romance

about the whole account, and yet it is from an official document which the future historian will read when he wishes to compile the facts concerning those massacres. It seemed to me, from what I knew of the situation, that a coach and six could be driven through these statements and I determined to get more information.

I next interviewed a gentleman whose position gave him the right to know all about the incident. He was neither a Turk nor an Armenian. Nor was he a missionary. I shall not mention his name because I do not care to needlessly embarrass him. It may seem somewhat strange to you that I am not entirely frank, but Turkey is a strange country, and those who furnish evidence which reflects in any way upon the government, are likely to suffer in some one of a large variety of ways. I am not reticent because I like to be, nor for the sake of adding a bit of mystery to my story, but simply because I must be.

When I mentioned the name of the Turk whose story I have just related, his quick response was :

“ He is a thoroughly honest man. I like him personally very much, and I happen to know that the missionaries also like him. On

any other subject except the massacres I should take his word as final."

"But on that one question?" I asked.

"That depends," he answered. "Tell me what he said, and I will give you my opinion."

"The Armenians surrounded a mosque and threatened to kill the Moslems inside."

He shook his head.

"The trouble originated in that way," I continued.

A second time he shook his head.

"Thirty-nine Turks were killed; one hundred and fifty were wounded."

"That is impossible," he answered.

"One hundred and forty Armenians were killed during the whole affair."

"I saw more dead bodies than that myself, and counted them," he replied.

"The massacre lasted only fifteen or twenty minutes."

"That is a grave mistake. It lasted for hours."

"Only one house was looted."

"That figure is too small by several scores," said he.

"I don't care to talk at any length of that affair," he continued, "for the victims are in their graves, and they cannot be called thence."



It is a closed incident, and though it was too horrible for words, we had better let it rest where it is. My special interest is in the living. But I must tell you that the matter was far more serious than you would suppose from those official documents. They are faulty in many important respects, and cannot be trusted as the basis of any fair and impartial statement of the case. How many were killed, no one will ever know. That there were hundreds I am sure.

“What I am most of all anxious about, however, is the signs of the future. The Kurds are an unruly and lawless folk, and when they were let loose they looted as many houses as the time allowed, but all that is nothing. The important part of the problem is, ‘How are these Armenians to recover themselves, and, in what way can they be assisted to do so?’”

There you have both sides of the shield. For myself, I accept the evidence given by the party of the second part, but you must do as you choose.

At any rate, I have succeeded in showing that the obstacles in the way of getting at the truth with regard to these massacres are not only numerous but difficult to overcome.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE WEAKNESS OF TURKEY.

“WHAT do you think of the future of Turkey?” queried a gentleman whom I met in Alexandretta.

“I can’t conceive of Turkey having any future unless she radically changes her policy, and that right quickly,” was my prompt reply.

“Is not that a hard prophecy?” he asked.

“Hard, but true,” I answered. “You cannot put up a building unless you have a foundation, and in Turkey there is no foundation.”

This is a fair statement of the case. The only thing on which Turkey depends for continued existence, so far as I can see, is the quarrelsome tendencies of the European Powers. Turkey would be driven across the Bosphorus within twelve months if the Powers could agree on any policy to pursue. As the matter stands, every foreign nation wants too greedy a share of the spoils, and the conse-

quence is that not one of them gets anything. Turkey is simply a bone with four big dogs and several little ones sitting around it. None of them dares to rush in and take the whole, for all the other dogs would combine against him. But if the time ever comes when the dogs shall consent to take each a mouthful, the bone will be quickly disposed of.

In the meantime, there is a great deal of senseless talk about reforms in Turkey, and yet everybody who has travelled through that country knows that reforms are impossible. The Sultan promised all sorts of things in the various treaties which he has signed, but he never intended to keep a single one of his promises, and cannot be forced to do so. He has been willing to agree to anything and to everything that the Powers demanded, but laughs in his sleeve as any other man would who was equally "childlike and bland." For that matter, it is an almost undisputed fact that if he were to honestly carry out his treaty agreements, he would have the whole Mohammedan world against him, and would raise such a pother o'er his head that his very throne might be in danger. The Mohammedan ruler of a Mohammedan people is forced to put all other forms of religion on the basis of unwilling tol-



eration. That must be distinctly understood, and any attempt to give equal liberty to all, except in diplomatic and honeyed phrases, which sound well and mean nothing, would end in his being a fugitive from the vengeance of his own subjects.

When the Sultan promised reforms, he sent Chakir Pacha and a large suite through the country to find out what parts of the political garment needed to be patched. Europe congratulated herself, and stirred up all the orators to praise her for her wonderful achievement. Turkey was to be regenerated; new measures were to be instituted which would be equivalent to a reincarnation; the Armenians were to be protected by the irresistible public opinion of Christian nations; and the millennium was to be taken by the shoulders and dragged into Asia Minor. But it was quickly discovered that you can no more easily compel Turkey to reform herself than you can persuade the crooked branch of a live-oak to straighten itself. The branch has grown crooked through a hundred years, and will remain crooked until it is cut off and sawn into straight timber. The conditions for reform do not exist in Turkey; the great body of the people not only do not want reform, but they hate it; and for



BEGGARS. . .





Abdul Hamid to run against the fixed prejudices of an ignorant people would be to invite assassination.

Chakir Pacha has been peering into odd nooks and corners for a year and a half to find a place where a reform can be safely deposited. He has some very wise men with him, men wise enough to know what the whole thing means, and who would tell you, if they dared to, that they are part and parcel of a great moral show which is intended to allay the suspicions of Europe, and they could safely add that it has been remarkably successful in doing so, in spite of the fact that it has done nothing else. The purpose has been, not to organize reforms, but to make the world think that they are to be organized. There is not in all Turkey to-day, a more farcical investigation than that of which Chakir Pacha is at the head. He is chiefly remarkable for his astuteness in finding a way not to do the thing he was ostensibly set to do.

I had not been a year and a half in my travels through Anatolia, but rather two short months, and I could only get a bird's-eye view of the situation, but I could mention at least a dozen reforms which have somehow escaped Chakir Pacha's notice, and which ought to be

attended to at once. It so happened that I was on the lookout for them, which perhaps gave me a decided advantage over him.

Take a simple illustration,—the matter of carrying arms. During my earliest experiences I had a long talk with a Vali, a man as honest as Turkish official life allows anyone to be. That may not be high praise, but it is much higher than can generally be bestowed. He assured me that the law was of universal application, namely, that no one could carry arms unless he had a special permit in writing, and was vouched for by a responsible citizen. There was no discrimination whatever against any class.

“And an Armenian?” I asked.

“He is treated precisely as the Turk is,” was the answer.

So far as the law is concerned, the Vali stated the simple truth. There is no fault to be found with the statute. So far as the lack of discrimination is concerned, he was wholly wrong. I do not say that he told me a falsehood; it is enough for my purpose to say that he did not tell the truth. Possibly he may have been ignorant, for we cannot expect even Valis to know everything, but he impressed me as being a very well-informed man.

I kept my eyes open after that, and found that every Turk and every Kurd I met in the streets had either a pistol or a long dagger, but I do not remember a single instance in which an Armenian was armed in the same way. I asked myself whether the Armenians were so afraid of guns that they dared not use them. I suggested this to a black-amber worker when sitting on a bench examining his goods. He gave me such a peculiar smile that I left him to think the matter over.

Yes, the law seems to be entirely just, but the trouble is in its application. If a Kurd seeks a permit to carry an arsenal on his person—well, he does n't seek any such permit, he simply purchases a pistol and a sword, wears them openly, and neither the Vali nor the Zaptieh thinks of asking any question. The affair is taken as a matter of course, and it is so much so that if you meet a thousand Kurds on your way, not one of them will be without his weapon. Indeed, they take great pride in their swords, whether they are farmers, merchants, or men who live by their wits, and hold up a caravan when their coffers need refilling. They take it as a compliment if you notice these adornments, and they have shown me Damascus blades that were worth many



pounds, with a bit of the Koran engraved on them enjoining their use only in the cause of justice. A Kurd's notion of justice, however, is somewhat elastic, and his sword could tell of many transactions of which the Prophet would not approve.

And the Armenian? you ask. That is quite another matter. The law allows him to ask for a permit, but it is extremely risky business to do so, so risky that no one does it. The argument runs thus: What can an Armenian want a gun for? He is not a soldier, he is not a hunter. To defend himself withal? Against whom, pray? Will he shoot one of his Majesty's subjects? That, of course, is his purpose. He is a rebel by instinct and by aspiration, and if he wants weapons it must needs be for revolutionary purposes. With that kind of public opinion he had better not go to the government house on any such errand as seeking the means of overturning the established *régime*. The Turk and the Kurd are presumed by officials to be all right, but the Armenian is not even allowed to prove himself to be so. He must needs be wrong, and the very nature of his circumstances puts the matter beyond a doubt.

Now suppose some poor Armenian has a gun

in his house, an old-fashioned flint-lock musket that is as likely to kill at the butt as at the muzzle, something that serves no better purpose than to scare the wolves, what then? Why, the moment it is discovered, the entire village is in an uproar. The Turkish imagination works at high pressure, and no matter what incredible story is told, it is widely believed. That man is one of a band of conspirators; the revolutionists have held secret meetings in his hut; and they have arranged to descend on the harmless Kurds and murder every one of them. You can't place any limit to what the Turk will accept as gospel truth under such puerile circumstances. He does n't use his reasoning powers, but flies off at a tangent and becomes frenzied with excitement.

The upshot is that the Armenian is arrested, and as no evidence can be gathered he stays in prison until somebody comes to his senses and releases him. Perhaps you will not call this discrimination in favor of one class and against another class, but it seems to me to look very much like it.

Then again, it is the law that everyone arrested for a crime shall within a reasonable time be made acquainted with the charge against him, and be tried at as early a date as

## 252 Through Armenia on Horseback

possible. That law is a just one, and you will find it in the statute-books of Turkey, but you will not find it anywhere else. It is something to show to strangers in order to prove that Turkey is not so black as her enemies paint her, but practically it is a dead letter. A prisoner has no rights whatever which the administrator of justice, so called, is bound to consider. A quick trial, and, I am inclined to add, an honest trial, that is, a trial on evidence which is not bought, is a very rare occurrence. If Chakir Pacha is really anxious to institute reforms, I can put him in the way of finding enough to occupy his thoughts for several years. I would like to call his attention to a political suspect at present in prison in Erzerum, and this is January, 1898. This man is, of course, an Armenian. He was arrested a year and a half ago. He is in a cell so filthy that even a dog would languish and die in it. His neighbors, those who dare to talk on the subject, believe him to be an entirely innocent man. They declare that the charges were manufactured with a purpose, and that the authorities lack the audacity to present the evidence which they pretend to possess. Yes, the law is that a prisoner shall face the charge against him within a reasonable time, and a year and a



half is supposed in Turkey to be within that limit. The consuls are of the opinion that nothing can be proven against him. One of them told me that he had used all the influence of his official position to get that prisoner into court, and now he has given the matter up in despair. The man has been dragged from his home, his business has been destroyed, and his family is in the utmost sorrow. But he is an Armenian and a suspect, and the chances are that someone has made up his mind that he is guilty, and he is therefore denied the proper process of law.

If you study the statutes, you will not be able to find a single fault, but live for even two weeks in any of the cities of Anatolia with your eyes and ears open, and you will find that there is no justice whatever for a criminal, if he happens to be an Armenian. Europe reads the law, and is satisfied, but the traveller sees its application, and is not satisfied.

I am inclined to go still farther, and say that the courts are nearly all corrupt; that even-handed justice is a thing almost unknown in Turkey. When in Constantinople I heard a story, the truth of which is vouched for by an authority that does not admit of a doubt.

An old practitioner was asked how the courts of to-day compare with those of thirty years ago, and his reply was, "They are decidedly more corrupt, and they are growing more corrupt every day." The statement was questioned, when he related this incident: "Some time ago an Englishman failed to collect a bill due him, and he came to this city and sued the debtor. The case was put into my hands. I took all the necessary measures, and was getting on famously, when all at once I discovered that the two judges had been bribed. Of course I had no chance to win under such circumstances, so I applied to the proper authorities, produced my evidence, and had the judges removed. I was getting on well a second time when I discovered that the defendant was at his old tricks again, and after a good deal of trouble I had the second two judges removed for cause. The defendant came to me soon after, and wanted to settle the matter, to which I, of course, agreed. Judge of my surprise, however, when he demanded that the settlement should be made on the basis of fifty per cent. of the original bill. I would not consent to this, but was curious to know his reasons for asking such an enormous discount. He told me then very

frankly that it had cost him the other fifty per cent. to buy those four judges, and that he wanted to settle because he could not afford to continue to buy judges indefinitely." The story has its humorous side, but as an illustration of the way in which what is called justice in Turkey is administered, it is somewhat appalling.

Then there is another matter of very serious importance if one wishes to get an inside view of Turkey. It has nothing to do with any treaty, and we may not, therefore, be supposed to have any interest in it, but the condition of affairs is so peculiar that it is quite worth our attention. I refer to the payment of official salaries throughout the Empire, or, more strictly, to their non-payment.

I have heard of Russian misdoings which not only illustrate my point, but also show that Turkey has successful competitors in this direction. Here is one instance out of many. The governor of a certain province had a salary of twenty-five hundred rubles, not large enough to allow him many luxuries. He had paid at least two years' income in the purchase of his position. Even we in America are not entirely unacquainted with that method of gratifying one's ambition, and, therefore, I am



## 256 Through Armenia on Horseback

not to be charged with throwing stones at this Russian governor. He was a thrifty fellow, and by dint of honest toil, and other means, managed to increase his revenue to about forty thousand rubles. That is called economy by some people, but by others who are more punctilious it is called roguery. He was endowed with a secretary, whose salary was small, but who took lessons from his superior and learned how to convert his annual revenue into a capital of one hundred thousand rubles, which enabled him to take his family to Italy every winter for their health, and for the waters which are said to produce wonderful cures.

The same thing happens very frequently in Turkey, and the Turk has a peculiar aptitude for making use of such opportunities which a kind providence places in his way. The one prominent and radical defect in her administration is that her official salaries are always in arrears. This is true of every part of the Empire, and there is scarcely an exception to the rule. If a Turk were paid promptly on the day his salary is due, he would probably have an apoplectic fit. Such a thing has hardly ever been heard of.

A quick observer said to me, "How can a

man help cheating the government when it has not paid him a piastre in eighteen months?" To be behindhand in a matter of this kind is to put a premium on corruption. The Vali, the Kaimakam, the Zaptieh, never get their money till long after it is due. It is all "Jawasch!" which means—by-and-by.

Take the case of an ordinary Zaptieh or policeman. His wages are small enough at best, but if they are not paid, he is forced to steal or cheat in order to meet his bills, for he must live. If he collects taxes, he adds something to the total amount for his personal purposes, and the people, who know how things are managed, grumblingly pay it. He inevitably acquires the habit of theft, and once acquired it is never broken. All over the East, you hear farmers complaining that they have to support not only the government but the tax-gatherer also. If the government paid its servants, it could require them to be honest, and punish the dishonest, but if it practically cheats its servants of their salaries, who can blame these fellows for following the example and cheating others? If a man raises two hundred bushels of wheat, the tax-gatherer measures it and declares that there are two hundred and fifty bushels. The tax on the extra fifty

bushels goes into his own pocket, and he eases his conscience by saying to himself that he is collecting his own salary, nothing more. But it is rather hard on the farmer, and creates a degree of discontent which may come to something some day.

The same logic applies to officials of a higher grade, and if you go up step by step to the loftiest, you will find the same conditions. It is perfectly fair to conclude that a country which does not pay its servants will not, and cannot, be well served. And in speaking so frankly on this subject I must not be regarded as a fault-finder, for the sake of the pleasure which adverse and sharp criticism affords a crabbed nature. On the contrary, I desire to be entirely impartial, praising where praise is due, and telling the truth when I see that things have gone wrong. I wish to be looked upon in the same way in which you look upon a geologist who is examining the rocks in an unexplored country, and who says that this is granite and that is sandstone, simply because the one is granite and the other is sandstone. I am not pachydermatous in my prejudice against the Turk, for in many respects I prefer him to either a Greek or an Armenian; but of what use are eyes, unless they see all sides of a



question? And of what use are lips, unless they tell with some degree of exactness, and a great degree of candor, what has been seen?

When it is evident that an official is surrounded by all the comforts and many of the luxuries of life—luxuries cost money in all parts of the world—and when I am told that a few years ago he was a poor man, that his present salary is inadequate to the requirements of his position, and that it has not been paid for nearly twice twelve months, it is apt to raise a slight suspicion in a man's mind, especially if he comes from New York, where a professional politician acquires a handsome fortune in an incredibly short time without the visible means of saving a penny. Either the Sultan does not know what is going on, or else he is powerless and winks at it; but that something is going on, and that the imperial revenue grows perceptibly smaller as it approaches Constantinople, is as clear to be seen as Mt. Ararat on a bright day. A *régime* in which officials fatten on the taxpayers, is so rotten that nothing but the most radical reforms can change it; and since reforms are practically impossible in Turkey, you can predict the ultimate result as well as I.

I have not found a man who in private con-

versation did not deplore this condition of things; not a man who believed there was any remedy for it. It has been the burden of my conversation on many occasions, but it is a dangerous subject to handle except in whispers.

Bribery and corruption have been so long the practice in Turkey that they have become an inherited tendency,—I had almost said an inherited passion. What everybody does, comes to be looked upon as the proper thing to do, and the Turks are so accustomed to being cheated that they would think the world was coming to an end if they were honestly dealt with. Mr. Ramsay in his delightful book, *Impressions of Turkey*, attributes many of the faults of the officials to their ignorance, and asserts that “you will be told, as a matter worth note, that such and such an official can read any paper presented to him,” the inference being that most of them can neither read nor write. This may be true of the officials in Middle and Western Anatolia for aught I know—he is not the man to make a statement without due authority—and it may possibly be true of the lower grade of public servants everywhere, but it is not true of those whom I have met in the East. On the con-

trary, they have been mostly men with some education, many of them boasting that they are graduates of the school for the education of civil officers in Constantinople. Their susceptibility to a bribe does not originate in the fact that they are a poor, ignorant set of fellows who know no better than to pocket everything within reach, but in the nature of their environment, and in the weakness of human nature. If the present condition of Turkey could be changed by putting men into office who could read and write, there would be some hope for the future; but the difficulty is that officials have a perfect understanding of their duties, but do not choose to perform them. Even a Zaptieh knows that when he swindles the taxpayer he is a traitor, but he wanted his office because it gave him an opportunity to do just that thing, and having secured the office shall he fail to profit by those opportunities?

Neither do I believe that the root of the trouble is to be found in the religion of the Turk. I am not squeamish about the kind of religion a man professes, but I would like to have him live up to the moral duties which his religion imposes. I prefer my Christianity because I think it the best thing the world has ever seen, or ever will see, and I would not



exchange it for any or all other systems of religion put together. At the same time, I respect a good Moslem. When on board the *Daphne* in the Black Sea, a man with a fez on his head asked me to point towards the East. I took out my pocket-compass and gave him the required information. There was a drizzling rain at the time, but he spread his little rug on the wet deck and began his devotions. On another occasion while we were straggling across country with the mud more than fetlock-deep, we saw another Moslem on the roadside so engaged in praying that he took no notice of us, though we presented rather an imposing spectacle with our eight or ten soldiers. In both cases I lifted my hat out of respect to men who were doing their duty as they understood it.

I heartily wish all Turkey were Christians, partly because I believe that Christianity would put new life into the people's veins, and teach them to build more schoolhouses, and apply sanitary laws to their houses, and lay out railroads, and emancipate the women of the Empire; but since they refuse to be good Christians, the next best thing that I can ask is that they shall be good Mohammedans. Mohammedanism does not teach its officials to be

corrupt, and the Koran is very explicit on the subject of cheating. No devout Moslem takes a bribe; nor does a devout Christian. But Christians do take bribes in spite of the teachings of their religion, and so do Moslems. The reason in both cases is equally plain, namely, that a man's religion does not amount to much as a practical force, and is only a profession with a deal of hypocrisy and humbug behind it.

Perhaps I am very rash in making these assertions, but I remember what an old Quaker said to me in the days when I was young and enthusiastic: "George, thee must not expect to make all men perfect with thy preaching; if thee succeeds in making a few of them half decent, thee ought to be satisfied." So I say of the Turk, that if his Mohammedanism will make him "half decent" I will ask no more—for the present.

Dishonesty in public officials is the prophecy of ultimate disaster. How long a government can hold together under such circumstances depends on chance. The law which brings ruin may work slowly and silently, but it never misses the result. I am afraid that the reforms which are needed in Turkey can never be instituted, and I am sure that that unhappy

country would have gone to pieces long ago but for the practical foreign element which does its business for it and saps its revenue in payment for services rendered. Turkey governed by Turks alone is unthinkable. The Armenian, the Greek, the Jew, the German, the Englishman, administer her affairs for her, and without them she could not continue to exist.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### WESTWARD BOUND.

I THINK we were all glad to leave Bitlis: I was, at any rate. To be sure, the Turkish officials did all they could to make us comfortable, and put themselves to considerable inconvenience on our account, but when there is a thaw, and the so-called streets are ankle-deep in mud, Bitlis is rather inhospitable. I had long talks with the missionary, and felt a kind of reverence for that spirit of martyrdom which faces a continuously impending danger, and is always ready to accept any fate which Providence may allot. It was very pleasant to sit in his little study and talk over the situation, the distresses of the past and the hopes of the future, and to visit his schools where bright-eyed Armenian children, a large proportion of them orphans, were absorbing the rudiments of knowledge.

There is a general opinion among the Turks

that missionaries are more or less conspirators, and in everything they do they are closely watched with a suspicious eye. I had ample opportunity to converse with them in private, however, and being a fellow-countryman they had every reason to give me their confidence. More than that, I was a brother clergyman, and had a right to know their grievances. They would not hesitate to talk very frankly with me; at least I think so. And yet I have never known a single instance in which a missionary has shown any other desire than to do his work without reference to politics. Of course they expressed a wish that they could have a larger liberty, and not be hampered as they are, and a regret that the government should make it so difficult to establish schools, but so far from inciting the hotheads, their influence is wholly in the direction of restraint. Turkey would do a very wise thing, in my judgment, if she should change her policy of repression, and encourage the missionaries to enlarge their field of operations. It may be a somewhat strange thing to say, and yet I dare to assert that the Sultan has in all his broad Empire no body of men who have a larger love for law and order, or who would do more to preserve peace, than these same American missionaries.





ARMENIAN GIRLS.





They accept even the limitations which are imposed by the civil authorities, and are doing the best that can be done under the straitened circumstances.

I had long chats also with the British Consul, Mr. Crow, who is also acting for our American interests. The Sultan, I am inclined to think, pursues a mistaken policy in making it difficult for us to send consuls to various parts of his Empire. It gives the impression that he is not willing to have certain facts known. Mr. Bergholz, in Erzeroom, has been trying for a year and a half to get his exequatur from Yildiz, but for some reason it is not forthcoming. We have invested considerable money in educational institutions there, and there seems to be no good reason why an American citizen should not have the right to look after it. If that right is denied, we very naturally ask why, and begin to wonder what is going on, or what is likely to happen that makes concealment necessary.

The British Consul has made a thorough exploration of the ravaged districts. He has visited nearly every nook and corner of the region within a radius of one hundred miles from Bitlis, and has acquainted himself with the condition of the Armenians. He was cer-

tainly more than discreet in not making any comments on the massacres, but he was ready to state the facts as he had learned them.

“I have had my doubts,” said one of our party during an interview, “about the stories of destroyed villages which have filled the ears of Europe. I have yet to come across a single one.”

“Well,” was the answer, “if you wish to see them, I can show you at least a score without much trouble.”

“You have seen them with your own eyes? I have always felt that the stories which have reached the ears of Europe were strangely exaggerated. This was natural enough. They came mostly from those who suffered, and I have attributed the facts stated to an Oriental imagination.”

“No,” was the reply, “there has been no exaggeration. Exaggeration is impossible. I have seen these things myself. Indeed, I have spent weeks in exploring the region round about, and am sure of what I say. You may not know,” he continued, “that I have been the recipient of liberal funds contributed mostly by Americans and Englishmen.”

“Especially by the English,” I suggested.

“Yes, that is true,” he replied. “And I



have myself caused fourteen villages to be built up from the foundations."

"Fourteen villages? You surprise me."

"Exactly. Fourteen villages. I ought therefore to know what I am talking about, and when I say that this number represents only a small fraction of those which were destroyed, you can see that the trouble has been widespread."

"But these villages," I said, "are not like New England or Old England villages."

"True," was his reply. "They are very humble and primitive concerns, and a whole village may consist of only forty or fifty mud dwellings. Sometimes more, sometimes less."

"And the houses are not expensive?"

"Comparatively not. The mud or clay is shaped, dried in the sun, and put into place. There is very little wood in them, since there is no wood in this country and what is absolutely necessary must be imported from a distance. But such houses serve their purpose, and to destroy them is as clearly a crime as though they were granite palaces. They are these people's homes, and should be held sacred."

I also had a long talk with another gentleman.

270 Through Armenia on Horseback

“Tell me,” I asked, “is the peace which at present prevails, permanent?”

“That depends.”

“On what?”

“On the commission of some act which may be regarded as revolutionary.”

“And what is the likelihood of such an act?”

“Let me explain,” he answered. “The Armenian is constantly under suspicion. The Turk, especially the Kurd, is always conscious of the Armenian’s larger aptitude for business, and is always envious of his success. He is also aware that the Armenian is a political enemy. The situation, therefore, is somewhat complex, and unless the Armenian is unusually prudent, he will find himself in difficulty before he knows it. Whatever he does will be misconstrued, and if it is possible to accuse him of disloyalty, it will be done, because it is for the interest of the government to prove to Europe that the Armenians are an intractable race, and wholly untrustworthy. So long as the Armenians keep in hiding, saying nothing—since saying anything will be twisted out of shape—they will be at peace. But the moment any imprudent act is done, or any rash word is spoken, the excuse for another onslaught will be found.

When that excuse shall present itself, neither I, nor you, nor anyone else can tell."

"And there are hotheads among the Armenians?" I asked.

"Undoubtedly," was the answer. "They are largely responsible for what has taken place, because their purpose is revolt."

"And then?"

"Well, then the innocent suffer, and the guilty escape. The Oriental method is to kill indiscriminately."

"Then there is no peace?"

"None that I can see, unless the Armenian submits to being gagged, and to have his hands tied."

"The outlook is not encouraging?" I said.

He did not answer, because the question seemed to answer itself.

Let me say once more that the history of disaster in Anatolia will never be written. It is impossible for the traveller to get at any accurate statement of the facts, because the Turks themselves do not know what the facts are. They have no capacity for the compilation of statistics, and do not even know what the population of any of their cities is. They only guess at the number of people in Constantinople and in Erzerum and in Bitlis.



But enough of this.

While in Bitlis, my thoughts were constantly turned towards home. The "heft" of my work, as the New England farmer would say, had been done. There were still other points of interest to visit, but so far as the great question was concerned, I had faced it in its own dwelling-place, and had done pretty nearly all that could be done to solve it. A wholly satisfactory solution was of course beyond the reach of anyone; but I had discovered facts enough to serve as a foundation for a reasonable theory of the situation.

"No more sledges or carriages," said Tewfik Bey. "Nearly all the rest of the journey must be made on horseback."

I did not regret this, for I had heard that the roads were generally good. We were disappointed, however, in that, for the road from Bitlis westward to Aintab, several hundred miles, was inconceivably bad. We found it the most breakneck path in Anatolia; not a road at all, but a tortuous, rocky, dangerous bridle-path. To cover twenty-five miles a day required anywhere from nine to thirteen hours. The fatigue of the journey and the intense cold at times called upon our utmost resources.

But I had the advantage of my comrades in

*cf. p. 70 & 73*  
two important respects. First, I have never been really cold in my life. I think I could keep house very comfortably in the centre of an iceberg. With the mercury close to zero, and while others froze their finger-tips and suffered agonies from cold feet, I had no inconvenience whatever; and on two days only did I indulge in the luxury of gloves. My fingers sometimes became stiff, but after thrusting them into the pocket of my fur overcoat for a few minutes, they were refreshed and as limber as ever. I don't know what my blood is made of: I imagine that it must have been of volcanic origin, but I am most cheerful and happy when the mercury crawls down close to the bulb. In the second place, I was out of doors fifteen hours a day, breathing the most invigorating and intoxicating air, on an average elevation of between three and five thousand feet from sea-level. It not only stimulated me, but made me positively hilarious, so much so that when we had scarcely anything to eat I supped on ozone and was content; and when we slept in a stable, I closed my eyes and dreamed sweet dreams. Hardships counted for very little, and the magnificent landscape so fully satisfied my soul that I could scarcely hear the cries of appetite. I think, in spite of

all we went through, that I have spent some of the happiest hours of my life on the tablelands and gorgeous summits of Anatolia. As memory brings back those scenes with an almost painful vividness, I find myself longing to take the saddle and climb those rugged steeps again. I have easily forgotten whatever was disagreeable, and keep in mind only the beautiful and the grand. Suppose Zigana did allure us close to its yawning chasms; and suppose Kop Dagh did let loose one of its characteristic snow-storms and try to bury us! What of it? These things were mere incidents not worth relating. They were only faint echoes, or the last rumble of a thunder-storm before the sun broke through the clouds. But the mountains, and the sky! Nature was majestic, imperial, awful! The stars were within easy reach if one stood on tiptoe, and brighter, clearer, more dazzling than I have ever seen them. These things crowd all else out of my mind—cold, hunger, vermin, danger. There is room in my mind for only pleasant memories; and no room whatever for anything else.

It was a long and tedious trip to Diarbekir. We followed the Tigris for a while, and were therefore in the lowlands. The roaring river,



which is extremely picturesque, furnished us with all the music we wanted as it broke into rapids, dashed through a defile, or poured itself with wild impetuosity over the rocks. Every now and again we left its bank in order to make our way over a hill and so avoid a bog; but we came back to it as to an old friend. Once in a while our path lay through the stony and dry bed of the river, and our horses had need of all their mental resources to pick their way, and not break their own and their riders' necks. It would never do to stumble, for in landing you would be sure to come to grief, and fall into the hands of the surgeon as a consequence. At one point we found some huge boulders which had dropped from a height and completely blocked our path. One of the Turks put whip to his horse, and climbing to the top, slid down the other side at the imminent peril of life or limb. I thought to try the same experiment; but when I found that my beast stood straight up on his hind legs, and that not even a Spanish saddle could prevent my falling backwards, with the possibility of the horse falling on top of me, I consulted prudence and dismounted in time to avoid the catastrophe.

Just at nightfall, as the stars were beginning

to peep through the gathering darkness, we forded the Tigris, and reached the big stable where we were to spend the night. Fording rapid streams was a pleasure when the water only reached the toes of our riding-boots, but when it was almost deep enough for the horse to swim, and we were forced to put our arms affectionately around his neck, and tie our feet in a knot back of the saddle, the prospect of a bath—the only chance we had for a bath during many days—was not exactly agreeable. I have all the necessary reverence for both the Tigris and the Euphrates, but they are muddy rivers, and in the latter part of December not wholly suited to bathing purposes ; especially when the only suit of clothing you have is the one you wear.

Ah, but how refreshing the tea was ! It was good tea, for these Anatolian folk are very particular in this respect ; and as I sat on the edge of my camp-bed, sipping it from a tumbler, the weariness of the journey fell away from me, and I became delightfully drowsy.

The truth is, this journey westward from Bitlis—which we were told could be made very comfortably—was by all odds the hardest part of the whole trip. Five hundred miles on horseback would be only a continuous delight

under ordinary circumstances ; but when you have to pick your way for hours over a swamp filled with rocks so close together that your horse can hardly find room to plant his feet ; or when you climb a mountain and are compelled to twist yourself into the shape of a corkscrew in order to get round the boulders, your enjoyment is of a very mild order. And yet when you ask a Turk if his roads are good, he invariably pronounces them excellent ; and he is honest, too, because he does n't know what a good road is.

The Tigris flows close by Diarbekir, and although we might have crossed it on a bridge, we mistook the path and were compelled to ford it again. The city is picturesque and full of interest for the traveller. We hired a large mansion surrounding a courtyard, owned by an Armenian, and were very comfortable. The first thing we did was to send our dragoman into the bazaar to buy a large earthen pitcher and basin, which enabled us to take a sponge bath. There are plenty of public baths scattered throughout the country, but a physician warned us against their use for various reasons. Hermann insisted on indulging himself, and as a consequence had an attack of erysipelas ; so we left him in hospital at Alexandretta



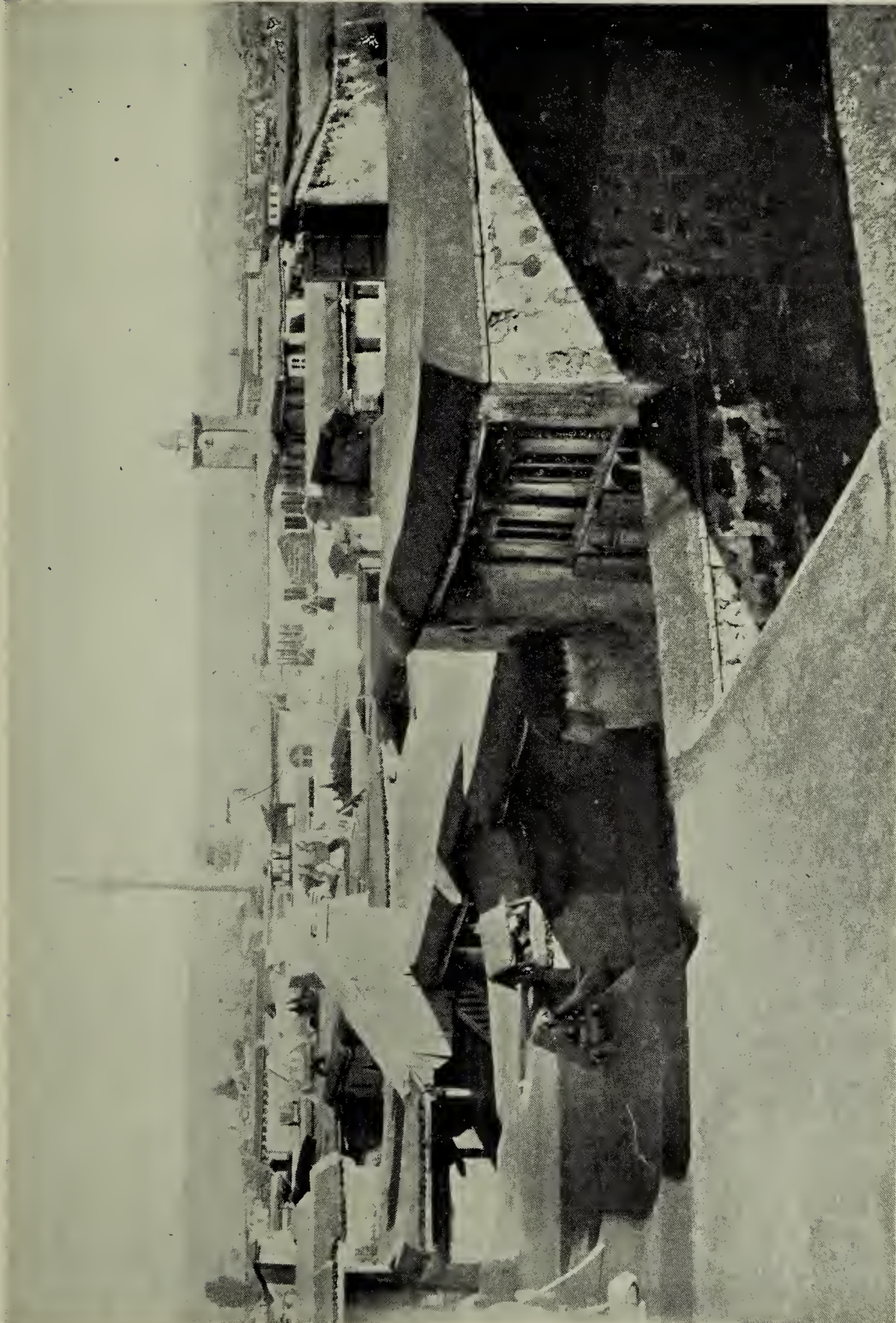
and took ship to Constantinople without him.

Diarbekir is a very old city, its history running back to the beginning of the Christian era. It has been held by the Persians, and by the Arabs, and by the Romans ; and if the tourist cares for relics he can find reminders of these three sorts of civilization.

It is a walled town, the walls being of black basalt, which give it a rather formidable appearance. The houses also are of basalt, and some of the streets—they are all frightfully crooked, by the way—are frequently so narrow that you can touch the houses on each side as you walk with outstretched hands. There are four gates, plenty of horses, but no carriages. You will find rare bits of architecture everywhere, very old, of course, and pointing to a civilization which underlies that of the present inhabitants, and clearly superior to it.

We remained there two days, during which it rained incessantly ; but that did not prevent us from lunching with the British Consul, or visiting the bazaar, or looking up such relics of a past age as were easily reached.

“Don't drink the water!” That was the imperative command of the doctor. It is apt to produce what is called “the Diarbekir boil,”



DIARBEKIR.





which resembles a carbuncle of the malignant sort, and leaves a scar that disfigures its victim. When I saw half a dozen men who had suffered in this way, my thirst was suddenly suppressed. As I dislike wine, and as whiskey gives me the rheumatism, I had a pretty hard time of it, for the tea made me nervous when taken in quantity, and the coffee, which was as thick as thin molasses, and almost as sweet, was unendurable.

The sun came out brilliantly the morning we left Diarbekir, and my muscles had become so hardened by my long ride that I greatly enjoyed my horse's company. I had great respect for him ; and as I gave him generous lumps of sugar I think he had a degree of affection for me. That rule, by the way, applies to some human beings as well as to all horses. Eight hours in the saddle, so far from being a hardship, was a delight ; but when the eight were extended to ten, or to twelve, or, as in one or two instances, to thirteen and more, we were well tired out at nightfall, and glad of a chance to rest.

From Diarbekir to Biredjik was a long and tiresome stretch. We never once left the majestic presence of snow-capped mountains ; and though we were assured at Bitlis that

when we got a bit farther to the south we should have spring weather and genial sunshine, we found our fur coats and wraps as necessary as ever. I supposed that the roads would improve as we moved westward, but I am compelled to assert that they grew worse and worse wherever it was possible for them to do so. I like to ride through a country where the scenery is attractive, and when I can devote myself to enjoyment of it; but if I am to watch every step my horse takes, and poise myself on the saddle with the care exercised by an athlete on the trapeze, the enjoyment is so mingled with anxiety that it is reduced to a minimum.

One instance of this remains vividly in my memory. There was a tremendous hill in front of us, and the bridle-path wound through an appalling assemblage of rocks of all sizes and shapes. I was in a delightful mood, for the wind was crisp and stimulating, and I felt as though all my years, away back to my twenty-first birthday, had dropped from my shoulders. The sun glistened on the snow, and between me and the horizon-line was a valley dotted with villages and surrounded by peaks which made the heart ache, they were so beautiful. Suddenly my horse came to a standstill. The poor

fellow was puzzled. His equine judgment gave way and he literally did n't know what to do. The angle of the path was as acute as that of the letter V, and it was necessary for him to curve his body into the shape of a crescent in order to get round the obstacle. He gave two or three grunts, as though to inform me that he was in a quandary, and then turned himself into a corkscrew, and slowly wound through the intricacies of the way. The situation was so ridiculous—for I had to balance myself with such skill as I could command—that I burst into a hearty laugh. In ten minutes we were out of the labyrinth, but when we reached the summit it was plain that there were others of the same kind, too numerous to mention. I made a few remarks—rather strong, I imagine—borrowed a cigar from Mr. Whitman, and gladly acknowledged that when a man is in such a fix as that, the introduction of nicotine into his system has a very beneficent effect.

We reached Biredjik on the afternoon of the last day of the year, and were so well bestowed through the courtesy of the kaimakam that we all had a good night's sleep. The house we occupied was directly on the bank of the Euphrates, so close to the historic river that



a pebble dropped from my window would fall into the torrent.

I was very much interested in this town of about eight thousand inhabitants, for several reasons. It is exquisitely situated on three or four hills, and from a distance presents a picturesque appearance. It is approached through innumerable olive groves, whose dark green leaves are restful to the eye in a country where you have not seen a tree for weeks. Olive farms are the chief source of revenue in this region. They are not affected by the cold, and they yield abundantly. A man with a fair-sized olive grove and a hundred fig trees is financially in a fine position. The figs and olives find a ready market, and the boxes of olive-oil soap, another industry, find their way into all parts of the world.

The houses of Biredjik are built of blocks of light limestone, and they give an impression of cleanliness which is not fully corroborated by facts. The limestone quarries are apparently inexhaustible, and the stone is so soft that a khan with half a dozen rooms has been cut out of the solid rock, its ceiling supported by large pillars.

Then again, I was greatly interested in the people of the town. About one thousand Ar-

menians live there, and when the massacres were on, a very curious thing happened. Whether the authorities had any conscientious scruples against wholesale murder, or whether they were prudent enough to recognize the distress and general derangement of business which would follow, neither I nor anyone else can say, as yet. At any rate, they gave these Armenians their choice between death and a renunciation of their religion. If they would adopt Mohammedanism, and turn their churches into mosques, they might be saved from extermination.

It was a dreadful alternative and ordeal. The conditions were arbitrary and uncompromising. There was no possible escape from them. Conferences were held, and the subject discussed. The poor fellows looked into the faces of their wives and children, whose fate depended on their decision. Perhaps no small factor in the problem was the persuasions of their dear ones, who must have begged them not to court certain death. It was a tragic scene, and a tragic moment. Their souls were wrenched, while the tears of their families flowed. Should they stand firm and die as martyrs, or should they make the concession demanded? Their brethren in other parts of

Anatolia were being murdered by the hundreds. The cemeteries were glutted with victims. There was weeping and wailing, and I doubt not gnashing of teeth also, at the grim necessity which had overtaken them. Could they not apparently yield and still secretly retain their faith? The Turk might compel them to confess the Prophet with their lips, but no person on earth could eradicate their faith in the true God. They could say "Yes," and mean "No," and thus save themselves and their children from ruin. To call a Christian church a mosque did not make it a mosque, and to say they were Mohammedans would not make them Mohammedans. Was the sacrifice of life worth their while, and would God forgive them for their denial of Him in order to secure peace and prosperity? Well, the truth is they surrendered, and the sword of massacre went back into its sheath. This state of things continued for many months, but when we visited the place we found that a great pressure had been brought to bear on the government, and that these Armenians had obtained permission to go back to their old faith. It was a very odd condition of affairs, and I was greatly stirred while listening to the story.





AMTAB.





On New Year's morning we crossed the Euphrates, less than a hundred feet wide at that season, but an eighth of a mile wide in spring, with Aintab in the far-away distance. We were ferried over in boats which were a cross between a canal-boat and a Roman trireme. There was antiquity in the shape of the things, and in every timber. However, we landed safely on the farther bank, and that fact disarmed all criticism.

Another long stretch over equally bad roads, and in good time we reached Aintab. That looked like home, and we dreamed sweet dreams of a reunion with dear ones, which made us feel that Aintab was almost in the suburbs of the New Jerusalem. The kaimakam offered us every courtesy, and we were entertained for the night in the house of a dervish whose hospitality seemed to be unbounded.

The city contains nearly fifty thousand inhabitants, one third of whom are Armenians. It is a flourishing city, characterized by something like enterprise—a very rare quality of character in Anatolia—and under ordinary circumstances the relation between Turks and Armenians is wholly amicable. The business of the city, as in all other sections, was under



the control of Armenians until the massacre threw things into confusion, and then the Armenians took to flight, leaving their shops in the hands of such friendly Turks as could be trusted. This seemed a very odd thing to do, and I made numerous inquiries concerning it. I naturally argued that if the Turks would not only kill the Armenians but plunder their houses, it would be an unsafe venture to throw their property into the hands of a Turk with the expectation that he would honestly render an account of his stewardship when it was demanded. I was assured, however, by men, Europeans, who have lived in Aintab many years, that it was customary for an Armenian and a Turk to be associated as partners. This was done for the purpose of protection.

“Yes,” I said to my informant, “that is natural enough, and I do not doubt that it is a prudent and a wise thing to do. But what puzzles me is that the Turkish partner should carry on the business and not appropriate both capital and profits.”

“That,” he replied, “is because you are not sufficiently acquainted with the character of the Turk.”

“But the whole thing is an anomaly,” I said.

“To a European, yes,” he replied, “but to

a Turk, no. The Turk can murder when either his religion or his politics prompt him to do so, and he will have no compunctions whatever. But in a case like this he will not only accept the responsibility, but will discharge his duty with surprising fidelity. There are, of course, instances of dishonesty, but in the great majority of cases, the income of the absentee is not in any way endangered."

I have said so much against the Turk that I am glad to give him his due in this respect.

The Armenians have quarters of their own, and there are strong gates between their quarters and those of the other citizens. On the morning of the massacre, the Armenians got wind of what was coming, and rushing into their own quarter, securely barred the gates. The mob wildly pounded against them, but they did not yield. The Armenians had no arms, but they were fortified, as it were, and were thus in temporary safety. The murders were, therefore, comparatively few in number. Still, there was a good deal of plundering, and I saw the ruins of a dozen houses which had been torn down, and holes in walls made by the impact of bullets. It was a rough, blizzard-like day—that of the massacre—but the

suffering was not as wide-spread as that endured in other places.

I am more than half convinced that religion had something to do with what occurred in Aintab. In this respect I regard the city as an exception to the general rule. The two men who planned the massacre were a dervish and another fanatical Mohammedan. I saw them both. It was plain that they bore no love to a Christian, and would not tolerate the new religion unless compelled to do so. They went into the affair with enthusiasm, and egged the mob on to do all the injury that was possible. Their scheme was in great part frustrated, however, by the swift flight of the news that the massacre was on.

I should be glad to dwell on the work which is being done in Aintab by our American missionaries, but I shall elsewhere devote a whole chapter to that subject. The hospital, the girls' school, the college, and the orphanage are in high and healthy locations, and they give a certain picturesqueness to the spectacle as one views the city from the hilltop, half a dozen miles away. The men and women who have devoted their lives to a noble task need no eulogium from me. I could easily fall on my knees before them in an act of grateful worship.



It is exceedingly stupid in the Turkish government to hamper these institutions in any way, though not more stupid than to kill the Armenians, who have paid the taxes which have oiled the wheels of authority in every vilayet. The Turk is an inconsequential creature, who simply follows the mood of the moment, and lets the morrow take care of itself. He cannot govern himself, and there is no reason why we should expect him to govern anyone else. He was hungry, and killed the goose that laid the golden egg, never thinking what he would do for the next meal.

It was a twelve-hour trip from Aintab to Killis, where we were to take wagons for the short remainder of the journey. And a very rough twelve hours they were. From early morning until dark we were in the saddle; but what of that, since we were all well and happy! The scenery was not attractive during these last days, but terribly monotonous. We had descended from the highlands where the air was full of ozone, to the lowlands with more than one wide swamp to cross, where the air was full of malaria. True, there were still white-capped mountains, but they were far away on the horizon-line, and the wind that came from them cut like a knife. I hoped

that the villages would show some signs of modern civilization as we approached the coast, but in this I was mistaken. The mud-huts appeared to be muddier than ever, and the people were less and less attractive.

At last we caught sight of the Mediterranean—the Mediterranean which is blue when you think it green, and green when you think it blue, the incomparably beautiful sea, the very poetry of salt water. It was like a friendly spectre on the horizon-line—so calm, so reposeful, and so full of a warm welcome.

We were only two hours from Alexandretta and our horses quickened their pace. The road was down-hill, a winding road, that gave us new scenery at every turn. Only a solitary snow-clad summit here and there was visible, keeping watch over the landscape. We should be in time for the next steamer for Constantinople, and then would come Paris and New York.

Alexandretta is an unsavory town on a marsh; but that was of no consequence since the big *Cleopatra* lay in the offing! On board in good time; and then the cheerful racket which attends departure. We stopped at Rhodes, at Chios, at Smyrna, finding our way through the wonderful archipelago, then through the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmora, and early in the morning we dropped anchor in the Golden Horn.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE MISSIONARIES.

THERE is only one genuinely uplifting and educational influence in all Turkey, and that, I am proud to say, is founded on American generosity. I refer, of course, to the missionaries.

I have spoken of them again and again in these pages, because during all my travels I had them constantly in mind. These incidental references, however, are not entirely satisfactory, and so, with your kind permission, I will chat about them more lengthily and more in detail. They are folk set apart for a distinct and special work, and, in order to accomplish that work, they must surrender all the ambitions which form so important an element of human nature.

I have read a story of the Middle Age, the age of chivalry, which illustrates my thought. The young Sir Knight was, in a certain sense,



an ecclesiastic. His life and his weapons were devoted to the cause of justice wherever it needed to be defended, and he never entered upon his career without the prayers of the Church. When ready to make his entry into the world he placed his sword on the altar, and with solemn pomp and ceremony it was blessed by the priest. He was to be the friend of the friendless, the champion of righteousness, the protector of the oppressed even at the cost of his life. He went forth in full panoply, and his courage was at the service of any who might call upon him.

The missionaries are the Sir Knights of modern times. Their weapons are no longer swords, but ideas. They are to be found in all quarters of the globe, and they are always surrounded by ambushed perils. Sometimes they go single-handed to meet an overwhelming opposition, and then again in small groups, a sort of forlorn hope, ready to start for heaven by way of China or Central Africa, deeming life of no value, regarding only their duty, and never once thinking of consequences. They are the representatives of a high civilization and of the best religious thought of the age, and are the "little leaven" which in good time is to "leaven the whole lump."

Perhaps this sounds too much like eulogy, but I am sure that it is an understatement of plain facts. I have had the pleasure of visiting many of them, as many as lived on the line of my travels through Anatolia, and have seen them in their homes and in their schools. I do not hesitate to say that they are doing more for the Turkey of to-day than all the European Powers combined. They are doing a modest work, but a far-reaching one, and it goes without saying that they are a devoted and self-sacrificing class of men and women, who deserve far greater praise than my poor pen can express. They are at once cautious and courageous. They must be courageous always because it requires the virtue of courage to pursue one's task against all possible obstacles and in the face of a people who, if the strong hand of the government did not hold them back, would destroy the buildings and drive the teachers and preachers from the land. They are cautious, because they confine themselves within fixed limits, never attempt to influence a Mohammedan to change his religion, and never give the authorities any real reason for complaint.

The missionaries are not liked; they are merely tolerated. This is perhaps natural, for

they minister almost wholly to the spiritual and intellectual needs of the Armenians; a race despised without cause, and a race which the government has in recent years been determined to exterminate. To educate an Armenian is regarded by a Turk, who obstinately refuses to be educated, as very close to a crime; and both the educated and the educator are roundly denounced. If you find in the city a physician, he is pretty sure to be either an Armenian or a Greek, and the chances are that he got his first start in life from the school of some missionary. The man who keeps the chemist's shop—if there happens to be one—is also Greek or Armenian, who was made capable of putting up a prescription in some missionary's hospital or medical school.

When you have a span of horses, one of which is willing to draw the load while the other is too lazy or indifferent to keep the traces taut, the lazy always hates the active. It would be an ideal society in which the poor man, instead of envying the rich, bestirred himself that he also might make a fortune. That ideal society does not exist in Anatolia. It is easier to indolently covet than to do hard work. The average Turk has no desire to be better off than his grandfather was, and is



glad of the opportunity to handicap those who seek success either in a business or a profession. I am not at all sure that a large part of the general dislike of the Armenians does not originate in their remarkable aptitude and their exceptional talent.

A Vali—not all, but the great majority—will tell you, with a shrug of the shoulders, that the missionaries are in league with the revolutionists, and that they constitute a menace to the government. I remember one particular and striking instance. A Vali, an honest man, commended by the missionaries themselves as such, visited me during my stay in one of the large cities. We talked very freely about the recent troubles.

“It seems to me,” I said, “that in the massacres you pursued a suicidal policy.”

He listened attentively.

“Because,” I continued, “you killed the only men who are able or willing to pay taxes. If you break up a man’s business, you lose something out of your own pocket. Millions of dollars’ worth of property have been destroyed; is it not so?”

“Better to destroy some property than to allow the government to be overturned,” was his answer. “We can’t afford to cherish traitors.”

The argument was entirely sound, provided his facts were true.

“Who is at the bottom of the difficulty; who caused the revolts which you speak of?” I asked.

“The revolutionists,” he replied. “They are cunning. They steal over the border at night, hold secret meetings, and are gone before we can catch them.”

Then he hesitated. I saw there was something more that he wanted to say and encouraged him to say it.

“And then the missionaries,” he continued.

“Well, what of them?” I asked.

“They don’t like the Turks, they want us to change our religion, and they are in league with the rebels.”

He honestly believed what he said, there could be no doubt on that subject, and if he could have his way he would banish every missionary from his vilayet. My impression is that the same feeling prevails rather extensively—at least I discovered something of it wherever I went.

Now I want to confess that before I visited Anatolia I reasoned very much as this Vali did, and I entered on my travels with a prejudice against mission work under such circumstances

as prevail in Turkey. But the most careful investigation proved that I was wrong, and that the Vali was wrong. The missionary steers clear of Mohammedanism as a pilot steers clear of a rock. He does no work whatever among the Moslems and does not attempt to do any. He knows perfectly well that if a Mohammedan changes his religion, his life—the life of the man who has changed his religion—is in danger. The Turk can bear almost anything, but on that he puts his foot down very heavily. I don't believe there is a single instance in the whole of Anatolia, in which a Mohammedan has become a Christian and kept his domicile among his fellow-Turks. I do not insist on the truth of that statement, because my knowledge is necessarily imperfect, but I have been told so by men who have spent many years in that country.

So far from being in league with the revolutionists, the missionaries are unreservedly opposed to them, not as a matter of policy, but as a matter of principle. They know only too well the havoc which follows the visits of these rogues. Not only is their own influence endangered, but the lives of all their people are put in deadly peril. They do not need to teach their congregations to be on their guard,



for the orphanage up on the hill yonder, with seventy little fatherless inmates, and the scores of new-made graves in the cemetery are all object-lessons which impress themselves on the most uncultured mind. In cases where a known revolutionist makes his appearance, the Armenians fly from him as from a beast of prey. They are acquainted with the kind of work in which he is engaged, and they will have none of it. In Erzeroom two of these diabolical fellows came from the Russian frontier. As soon as it was discovered that they were in the city, the men, women, and children flew to their homes as though Behemoth had been let loose.

In some notable instances, missionaries have openly joined hands with the civil authorities for the suppression of a revolutionary spirit. I refer especially to Van, which is only a few hours from the Persian border. It is the most dangerous spot in all Anatolia at the present moment, and what goes on there is watched with great solicitude.

I wanted to go to Van, and it was my original plan to do so. I was vastly disappointed when I found that the journey was impracticable, and gave it up with extreme reluctance. As the time came, however, to start from Erzeroom

we found that the mail ponies had not been able to get through on account of the blocking snow. We talked the matter over very seriously, but the winter season was well under way. The passes we had to cross in any event on the road to the south were becoming more dangerous every day, and even if we succeeded in getting to Van the road thence to Bitlis was not an easy one, and we might be delayed for a month. So we determined to take our chances with the bridle-path to Bitlis direct.

I heard a great deal about Van, however, and venture the assertion that Dr. Raynolds, the missionary and physician, has been worth more to the cause of law and order in that disturbed vilayet than a whole battalion of Turkish cavalry. He takes the same view of this question that all the other missionaries do, but he has had a larger opportunity than others to show that our kind of religion is not a religion of dynamite ; and that reckless rebellion receives no support from a true Christian.

Our route was laid out in such a way that I was permitted to spend a day in Aintab, and a very profitable day it was. Dr. Shepard, physician and surgeon, came to call on me, bringing with him an extra horse, and we rode through the quaint old city, with an Arabian

flavor in its architecture, to the hospital. First, I went into the prescription-room, where two gentlemen were kept busy all the time; then into the room where a crowd of patients, not Armenians alone—please take note of that fact—but Turks also, were waiting their turn to have his attention; and then into the sick-wards where I saw a Turk in one bed, while in the bed next to him was a wounded Armenian. The women, by the way, were looked after by Dr. Caroline F. Hamilton, who has an immense amount of work to do, and is thoroughly equipped for it, both by nature and education.

Try to estimate the value of such a man as Dr. Shepard in a Turkish town like Aintab. Not only a man of culture, but a skilful surgeon, he is imbued with a missionary spirit, has left home and friends, has expatriated himself at the call of duty, and is devoting his whole time to the cure of the sick in a foreign land where there are none of the comforts of an American home! He is not alone in this respect. Scattered over the country are others equally brave and devoted. Do such men foster rebellion? The Turk cannot understand his interest in them, and attributes all sorts of motives to him, and to the other gentlemen in the same profession—all sorts of





A DERVISH.



motives except the right one. They are suspicious of him, and the feeling against him is akin to hatred. It is strange, but not more strange than true.

When we were at Bitlis, where we remained four days, Dr. Wallish, the Austrian doctor who accompanied us, prescribed for one of our party a simple drug. We searched the city through, a city of thirty-five thousand inhabitants, and found that there was neither chemist nor physician. There had been a doctor in the place once on a time, but he died, and no other ever came. Language fails us when we try to express an opinion of such a community. Suppose a man breaks his leg—"Inshallah!" Or suppose an epidemic rages—"Inshallah!"

To show that accidents do happen, let me cite the fact that Dr. Shepard performs on an average between four and five hundred capital operations every year, and of course numberless minor ones. Now the people of Aintab place some value on his services in ordinary times, but during the massacres the mob hunted for him with deadly intent and he narrowly escaped their vengeance. A friendly Turk saved him. At the critical moment this Turk appeared, placed himself against the



closed gate of the enclosure, and told the crowd that they could only get at the doctor over his dead body. Just then the soldiers came round the corner and the good man was saved.

An Englishman who ought to know better told me that all missionaries are rebel-makers and that it is the duty of the Sultan to get rid of them. "I would have him use the strong hand, as the Russians do," he said, "and clear the country of them."

I remarked that this was impossible because they have had a foothold in Turkey for a long while; that their presence was approved by the predecessors of Abdul Hamid, and that, moreover, they were protected by certain treaty stipulations which it might not be easy to break.

The statement of fact produced no effect, and I asked: "What special harm do they do?"

"They teach revolutionary doctrines," he replied.

"I have not heard of that," I said. "On the contrary, they refrain from exercising any political influence whatever."

"They educate the young, do they not?" he asked.

"Assuredly," I answered.

“Well, then, education is only another word for revolution, and there you are.”

“Is that so, indeed?” I replied, rather hotly, I fear. “You are by no means complimentary to the government. Do you really mean that the Sultan is safe only so long as he keeps his people ignorant; that it is dangerous to teach them to think? Then in order to keep the ruler on his throne you must abolish all school-houses, go back to the Middle Ages, or even to the barbarism behind them. The Sultan himself does not, apparently, agree with you on that subject. He has established public schools everywhere, and is doing his best to make his people intelligent.”

Just then something occurred, and I have not had a response from that day to this.

For myself, I think the only hope of Turkey is to be found in the education of the people, and to such extent that they will first see the necessity for reform and then demand it. And believing that, I bow my head in the presence of the missionaries, looking upon them as providential men and women doing a providential work at the cost of comfort in all instances, and in some instances of life itself.

There are four important centres of educational influence in Turkey, and they are all re-

lated to America. We have planted in that region something over two million dollars' worth of property, have constructed buildings which are models of comfort and convenience, and which will serve the Turks as examples of the proper road to take whenever they conclude to go and do likewise. At the present time, however, they are unwilling to follow that example, a fact which has caused me great surprise. You would naturally think that when a people have the opportunity to do a good thing, they would not be satisfied to do a bad thing. But the Turks do the bad thing in preference, for no other reason, so far as I can discover, than that they like their old stony paths better than a new macadamized road. The missionary schoolhouses and hospitals are fashioned after those of America, but when a Turk builds either the one or the other, he ignores all modern improvements and sticks to his own methods, with an obstinacy that is simply appalling. I have visited several Mohammedan schools, and in one or two instances found it impossible to remain. The laws of sanitation were not recognized, and the only wonder was that the pupils were kept alive. The subject of ventilation was apparently beyond their reach; the water-closets were in the hallway,



and the air was positively unfit to breathe. It is a curious fact that a people who live out of doors all day, and know what fresh air is, can be satisfied with that sort of thing.

But let me return to our own schools. First, and most important, we have the famous Robert College, situated on a high hill just north of Constantinople, and overlooking the Bosphorus. I doubt if there is an educational institution on the planet with a more eventful or romantic history, or one which will compare with it in the exercise of beneficent influence. Its course of instruction is as thorough as that to be had in any similar institution in America, and it is filled with eager pupils from all parts of the Orient. There is, of course, no religious test; its doors are open to all alike—Mohammedan, Greek, Jew, or Armenian. And in whatever part of the Eastern world you may wander, you are sure to meet someone who graduated at that college, and who speaks of it and its president, Dr. George Washburn, with mingled affection and reverence. I travelled with Dr. Washburn from Paris to Constantinople, and our conversation turned frequently to the institution over which he presides with such dignity and tact.

“The Sultan,” he said, “may object to all

non-Mohammedan schools on general principles, and it is not unnatural that he should do so, but so far as Robert College is concerned, he has always occupied a friendly attitude."

"There has been no friction between you and the government?" I asked.

"None at all," was the quick reply. "On the contrary, during the second day of the massacre, the mob came within rifle-shot of the college, and we were rather solicitous as to what might happen. Our property is valuable; our apparatus is costly; and a crowd with bludgeons could do us a great deal of harm. But in the nick of time some regulars appeared, and the danger was over. They had been dispatched by the Sultan for our protection, and they remained on the premises until order had been restored."

When I think of Robert College, I always compare it to a beacon-light on a headland, throwing its bright rays into the darkness as far as the horizon-line. And when I speak of darkness do not suppose for a moment that it refers to Mohammedanism. If a man chooses to be a Moslem, that is solely his business, and I have no desire to interfere with him. He can take his Koran, and I will take my Bible; and if he is a better man with his Koran than

I am with my Bible, I will take off my hat to him. I refer to the intellectual darkness which is thick and dense throughout Turkey. A beacon-light which shows the people that they have brains, and tells them how to use them, has a value beyond all computation, and Robert College is a Pharos of just that kind.

Then at Aintab, at Marsovan, and at Harpoot are lesser institutions of the same kind, but doing an equally important work. They are presided over by learned men and cultured women—men and women who are born to be teachers and preachers. There are thousands of Armenians and Greeks scattered over the country who owe all they have in the way of education, and consequently their superior means of making a livelihood, to these institutions.

I shall never recover from my regret at not being able to visit these places where the electricity of progress is being generated. Under the circumstances, however, it was not to be thought of, and I pushed the desire aside with an aching heart. I was travelling through the eastern district, while these were far to the west. I could only have reached them after weeks of difficult travel, and the conditions under which I made the journey made it nec-



essary for me to take the most direct route to the sea after leaving Bitlis. I especially desired to spend some days in Harpoot, for great and sad events had occurred there. Not only the Armenians, but also the missionaries passed through untold suffering. The institutions were paralyzed, and it seemed at one time as though they would be wholly blotted out. Their buildings were destroyed and the cruel sword made havoc. Not a teacher but faced death many times, and not a teacher shrank from the performance of duty in that terrible emergency.

A missionary's work is peculiar. He does not confine himself to the city in which he may be located, but visits the outlying districts within a good many hours' ride on horseback of his residence. If there is a chance to establish a school anywhere, he at once begins the task, hires a building, and purchases the necessary books. But he must have teachers. If he can find an American man or woman to take charge, so much the better, but such men and women have already more than they can do, and he, therefore, casts about among the Armenians. He finds someone who has graduated at Harpoot, for instance, and the thing is done. Almost every missionary has several

schools of this kind, and I can assure you that his task is no light one. A few years of that kind of work, added to the constant necessity of being on the lookout for trouble with the government—which nearly always hinders him as much as possible—and also for that other kind of trouble which may possibly end in massacre—yes, a very few years of that kind of work brings on a nervous condition which ends in prostration.

I have seen a large number of these missionaries and I have found them a rather sad set of men. They are without congenial companionship from one year's end to another; they lead secluded and lonely lives; they are keenly on the watch for danger, not to themselves but to the people among whom they work, some of whom are apt to be hot-headed and restless. That kind of life tells not only on a man's brain, but on his body as well. The price to be paid for the enlightenment of the nation is very heavy, but these noble men and saintly women are willing to pay it, and I for one feel that my poor life amounts to nothing in comparison; so with a full heart, a heart with a big ache in it, I cry, "God bless them!"

## CHAPTER XV.

### TURKISH SCHOOLHOUSES.

**D**URING my travels I noticed a number of small and large schoolhouses, and my curiosity naturally became excited as to what kind of a national system of education exists in Turkey, and to what extent the boys and girls of the Empire are trained by the government for their duty as loyal subjects. I took pains to visit several of these schools, those in Trebizond and Erzeroom especially, and though they are by no means to be compared with those which shelter American children, they presented many points of interest. They are crude institutions, mere seed corn of a possible future crop. I am not prejudiced when I say that they lack the equipment which is furnished by the missionary schools in Harpoot or Aintab, and that in all essential respects they are inferior to the Armenian school or college of Erzeroom.

As a general rule, the sanitary arrangements



are exceedingly imperfect, and for that matter it is safe to assert that the Turk has no knowledge of sanitation, and apparently no desire to know anything about it. He is as much behind the age in this as in all other respects. There is no such thing as science in Turkey, and no such thing as philosophy. With the exception of that notable scholar, Ahmed Midhat Effendi, and possibly half a dozen others, there are neither writers nor thinkers in the Empire. While a great many of the officials are well informed, there are very few who can claim to be thoroughly educated, and these few were not educated in Turkey but abroad. Music, art, science, political economy are in a paralytic condition. From Trebizond to Alexandretta I discovered one single musical instrument, and that was so completely out of tune that even Mr. Whitman, who is something of an expert, gave it up in despair. Why, then, should you expect a people whose environment is wholly nomadic, to take any interest in such things as ventilation and drainage ; and why need you be surprised when I say that I found the air in one of the public schools so impure, from causes which ought not to have been allowed to exist, that I could not remain in the building ?

If you can travel nine hundred miles and

never see a man with either newspaper or book ; if you can enter a thousand houses and not catch a glimpse of any reading matter whatever, or even of a picture on the wall, you may safely conclude that you are in a unique corner of the globe, and that the people do not breathe the air of progress. Where there is neither reading nor writing, there can be no thinking. The Sultan may build schoolhouses, but it will take a couple of generations before the people will make a proper use of them. Where there is no desire to learn because ignorance will serve the general purpose as well, you need not hope for much enthusiasm in the matter of education. There is no such enthusiasm in Anatolia ; or if there is, I have been unable to discover it.

But perhaps I judge harshly, and without a proper knowledge of the facts. Let a pure Turk speak, therefore, and put the matter in his own way.

It so happened that Sirry Bey, who was the leader of our expedition, is also Secretary-General to the Ministry of Public Education, and I promised myself the pleasure of a long talk with him on this subject. We were too busy with other and more pressing matters while *en route* and the proper occasion did not present

itself; but when we boarded the *Cleopatra*, with five or six days of absolute leisure ahead of us, I found ample opportunity, and gladly availed myself of it. After the morning cup of coffee, we met in the smoking-room and I began the conversation at once.

“Sirry Bey,” I said, “I have heard from various sources that His Majesty no sooner came to the throne than he began to reorganize the educational system of the Empire.”

“That is true,” he answered. “He began, moreover, in such earnest that at the present moment we have schools doing a good work, in all parts of the country. The young are being carefully trained, and we Turks are as ambitious as our neighbors to make a good record on this subject.”

“What schools existed before the accession of the present Sultan?” I asked.

“We have had a school system for many years,” was the answer; “but I must add that it was very imperfect. The schools, both civil and military, were not only few in number, but they were not by any means equipped as they are now. There was in Constantinople only a normal school, and in Galata, which, as you know, is now a part of Constantinople, a single lyceum.”



“Then the Sultan,” I said, “seems to be specially anxious for the education of his subjects.”

“Decidedly,” he answered, “and in proof of that fact, behold the large number of high- and low-grade schools in every vilayet. He had no sooner reached the throne than he began this important work. Whereas our schools were, in the old time, few in number and rather limited in their influence, it is now possible for everyone to have some sort of an education. Let me give you a list of the various kinds of schools which have been established in recent years, and you will see that I am telling you the exact truth. Certain carping and critical foreigners who are hostile to Turkey may declare that our people have no means of getting instruction ; but such statements are the result of prejudice and have no real foundation. I do not say, for I wish to be entirely frank, that our schools are in all respects equal to those in America, because I am well aware that they are not, but you will not forget that we have been engaged in the task on its present large scale only about a quarter of a century, while your efforts in this direction date from your beginning as a nation.”

“This is all very interesting,” I answered.

“Now will you tell me in general terms what kind of schools have been founded, and what classes in the community are reached by them?”

“Certainly. In the first place there is a School of Laws, whose purpose is indicated by its name; then we have a Civil Administration School, in which pupils are taught political economy and fitted for diplomatic work; then comes the School of Fine Arts, and a Commercial School where boys are prepared to become merchants.”

“Excuse me,” I broke in, “but are these schools open to all, or——”

“Yes, yes, they are open to all; that is to say, the civil schools are open to all, but of course the military schools are for Mohammedans only. For example, in the higher grade of schools in Constantinople are about two thousand pupils, or, to be more exact, eighteen hundred and nineteen, and of these six hundred are Christians, who have the same privileges as the Mohammedans.”

“Then there must be a large number of other schools,” I said; “those which are not supported by the government.”

“Undoubtedly. You have seen some of them on your way. The Greeks, the Jews, the

Armenians—all have schools of their own, which are supported by the generous and wealthy among these different nationalities. Besides, all your missionaries have schools, and there are many missionaries in Anatolia.”

“And these educational influences are on the increase?” I asked.

“Judge for yourself,” he answered. “At the beginning of the present reign there were only six military gymnasiums, or higher schools, and they gathered two hundred and fifty pupils; whereas, according to the last report, the pupils numbered fifteen hundred. Public opinion has been cultivated in favor of a thorough education for military officers, and the opportunities which are offered are largely and gratefully made use of. The standard, not only of military, but also of civil education, has been raised, and its agreeable consequences are being reaped by the people.”

“Referring to military matters once more,” I said; “you know it is the custom in other countries to send certain pupils abroad that they may come into touch with the army system of their neighbors.”

“Exactly,” he replied; “and the same rule is followed in Turkey. We have not only invited German officers to come here and give



our troops the benefit of their superior training, but every year we send a number of graduates from the higher military schools—those who are thought to be the most promising, and to have the greatest talent—to Berlin, where they take a supplementary course in the higher branches, during three years, and then return to teach the Turkish army.

“Ah!” he continued, “I have forgotten to mention one important fact. In addition to the schools already referred to, there is the School of Achirets.”

“Excuse me,” I said; “but I don’t quite understand.”

“The School of Achirets,” he answered, “is in Constantinople, and it is a somewhat peculiar institution. We have met on our travels a number of Kurdish chiefs, but you know that further south there are many Arab chiefs also. Well, the government has made arrangements for the education of the children of these chiefs. They receive their board and tuition during five years as the gift of the Sultan, and then attend some military school for another year, after which they return to their homes pretty well equipped for the position they are to occupy.

“Nor are the Turks without charities. We

have schools in which the deaf and dumb are taught, and other institutions whose object is to ameliorate the condition of the afflicted."

"And these civil schools," I asked, "are to be found everywhere?"

"In every city and village," he answered. "Moreover, where the hamlet is specially small and insignificant, you will find an Imam, the preacher, who also undertakes the task of teaching the children."

"One other question and I have done," I said.

"And what is that?"

"How about the girls of Turkey? In America we think it as important to teach girls as boys."

"I am glad you have asked the question," was his reply; "and I am still more glad to give you an explicit answer. We do not neglect our girls in Turkey. From times long since passed, there have been regulations for the education of the other sex, but until lately they have been practically a dead letter. The instruction given was in most cases extremely rudimentary. The present Sultan has taken special interest in this matter, and has established high schools for girls in Constantinople and in many of the vilayets. More than that,

he has created an order for women alone. It is called the 'Shafakot.' The decoration is worn by some member of nearly every royal family in Europe, and is bestowed at the sovereign's pleasure on any woman who deserves special distinction."

I closed the conversation at this point. The interview was an interesting one, and many of the facts related will be new to the American people. As we rose, however, I said: "Sirry Bey, I have heard a good deal concerning the censorship in Turkey. Can you tell me about it? In what way does it affect the schools—that is, the school-books?"

"We have a censorship," he replied, "as all the world knows. We believe that certain misstatements about Turkey, and certain political doctrines which are injurious to the welfare of the people, should be suppressed. It is the business of the censor to exercise vigilance in this direction. If an Emperor or Sultan seeks the good of his subjects, he ought not to allow false doctrines or revolutionary ideas to find their way into the country."

"For example, the Armenian question," I suggested.

"Yes, it is a good example," he answered. "There is no such place as Armenia, it is



Anatolia, and why should people be taught that there is an Armenia, when it may possibly cause embarrassment both to the people and the government?"

"But there has been an Armenian kingdom," I said.

"True, and the facts of history cannot be erased, nor have the Turks any desire to erase them. But to-day there is no such place as Armenia, and to teach that there is, is not only an error but a fault."

So I said "Good-morning." I certainly disagree with some of the assertions made above; but Sirry Bey has a perfect right to state his case in his own way, and I am glad to have accorded him that privilege.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### AN ARMENIAN'S VIEW.

**D**URING my journey I had many long talks with many Armenians. They never came to see me, for if they had done so they would have suffered as though they had been criminals. That fact is significant as a sign of the times, and constitutes a comment on the real relations between the Armenian and the Turk. He is always a suspect,—is always treated as such. No cat ever watched a mouse with greedier gaze than Turkish officials watch Armenians. The system of espionage is perfect, and it not infrequently happens that a slight and worthless incident is magnified into something of importance, and an arrest is the result. There is no reason why the Armenian should love the government, and yet he would be thoroughly loyal if he could enjoy any degree of security for life and property. There is every

reason why the Turk should grant these inalienable rights, for the Armenian pays the taxes which make government possible. So true is this, that in certain vilayets something like political chaos exists, and the government is handicapped because the taxpayers have been murdered, and there is, therefore, no money in the treasury.

Since the mountain could not come to Mahomet, it became necessary for Mahomet to go to the mountain. I had a mean feeling when I made an appointment to meet an Armenian in secret, and could not restrain a certain feeling of self-contempt because it would not be safe to act openly. Not that I need run any risk of my own safety, but that an open meeting would have seemed like a defiance, and the man who met me might have been driven out of the country. I know this is a hard statement to make, but I make it deliberately because I know it to be true. No, if an Armenian had called on me, and had spoken with anything like candor, he might have found himself in prison in less than twenty-four hours. I was bound to see him, however, for that was the chief purpose of my mission. It would have been very stupid to listen to what the Turks had to say, and to regard that as con-



clusive without hearing the evidence on the other side. If I tell the Turk's story it is just and right that I should also tell the story of the Armenian, or rather let him tell it in his own way. This latter is not an easy task, but it has been accomplished nevertheless.

The interview which I now proceed to relate is a composition ; that is to say, it does not contain the opinion of one man, and did not come from one source, but contains the opinions of half-a-dozen exceptionally intelligent Armenians, given to me on several occasions, and under varying circumstances. I have for the sake of unity and emphasis given it the form of an interview with a single individual. I have my reasons for this also. I have heard, since I left that country, that all Armenians who are known to have had relations with me, will be held responsible for what I say, and it is safer for them that I give no names and no hint of the localities where my information was obtained.

My first talk was with a man who is a scholar and a man of means. I found him in a perfectly calm frame of mind, not at all inclined to revolutionary sentiments, and deploring the futile and feeble and idiotic attempts to raise a revolt among his people. He was certainly

proud of the past history of what was once an Armenian nation; and for that no one can blame him.

He began the conversation in this way: "I want to say that in many instances the Turks have been more than kind and friendly to us. When the troubles were on, thousands of Armenians were protected by their Turkish neighbors who knew they did not deserve to be killed, because they had committed no act against the government. When the storm raged, and the work of wholesale destruction of our people was being accomplished, they opened their houses and furnished an asylum to many fugitives. Less than this I ought not to say; and that much of gratitude I am ready and glad to express."

"Are the Armenians on an equality with the Turks?" I asked.

"Where?" he queried.

"Well, in the courts of law," I said. "If, for example, an Armenian is arrested, does he receive the same measure of justice as a Turk, or is there a discrimination in favor of the latter?"

"In theory," he answered, "the law applies to all alike, but in practice it does not. You know that our laws are based on the code of





BARBERS.





Napoleon, with such changes and modifications as are made necessary by climate and special conditions of life. That law is supposed to deal with all classes, without reference to nationality or religion, but ——”

“ Well,” I said.

“ But it does not,” he answered.

“ Let us suppose a case,” I continued. “ An Armenian accuses a Turk of having stolen his property. What is the result ?”

“ Some years ago, when we were living in peace,” he replied, “ the Armenian would have had a perfectly fair chance to win his case, and recover his property.”

“ And now ?” I asked.

“ He would have no chance at all. The general feeling against him is so strong, that anything in the way of redress is impossible. He not only cannot recover, but is likely to suffer still further injury if he pushes the matter.”

“ But if the Armenian happens to be rich ?” I queried.

A shrug of the shoulders. “ Then the affair would take a different turn. There is no country where money has such influence as here. There are good judges, who cannot be bribed, but in a large majority of cases gold is

easily converted into evidence for the man who is willing to spend it."

"So much for criminal offences," I said. "How about political offences?"

"There a man is in an absolutely hopeless condition," he replied. "If an Armenian is arrested on suspicion, he may or may not be guilty. The law says that he shall be made acquainted with the charge against him, and shall have full opportunity to defend himself. But in such cases the law is wholly ignored. I know instances in which persons thus arrested have been kept in prison for months. And in such prisons!"

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Simply this: They are put into cells with perhaps six or eight others—mind you, they ought to be adjudged innocent until guilt is proved—and these cells are unfit for a human being to live in. They are compelled to perform all the offices of nature in those narrow quarters, and, of course, the most direful results follow. The air is unbearable, and to eat and sleep in a place of that kind is likely to entail disease to the endangerment of life. And then—" here he hesitated.

"Tell me the whole story," I quickly said. "When the worst is known, the remedy may



not be far off. Possibly the Sultan may not be aware of the abuses in these far-away districts."

"I believe that to be true," he replied. "The office-holders are all politicians. They want to stand well with the central government, and if they can give the impression that they have caught a revolutionist and forced him to confess, they may hope for a reward."

"Forced him?" I asked; "what do you mean by that?"

"Just what I say," he replied.

"In what way can he be forced?" I said.

"By various kinds of torture," was the answer.

"Physical torture?"

"Precisely."

"Do you mean that?"

"I mean exactly that. He is lashed on the bare back, in some instances, until he either faints, or, to escape further punishment, confesses anything, and signs any document which may be presented. There are also other means of torture, which would seem to you to be incredible. I am speaking by the book, and if you had time, you could easily verify my statements. Remember, please, that in such matters I refer only to political suspects, and not to ordinary criminals."

“Are Turks ever tortured?” I asked.

“Without doubt,” he replied. “Whenever a Turk is supposed to have some information which the authorities ought to know, there is no hesitation in using the thumbscrew. But the instances of such proceedings are rare. They are not so in the case of suspected Armenians. I ought to add, however, in order to be perfectly fair, that the same thing occurs constantly in Russia, in Persia, in China, and in all other Oriental countries. I don’t think the Turk is any worse than his neighbors, but being almost a European, why should he not be better?”

“But there are Armenians on the police force,” I said.

“Yes, and they are worse than the Turks.”

“Why?” I asked.

“Because the Armenian must prove his loyalty by his arrests, and in doing so he is more diabolical than the Turk. You see, he begins his official duties as a suspect, and must be over-zealous in order to prove that he is not partial to his countrymen. The worst men on the force are often Armenians, for this reason.”

“I have heard also,” I continued, “that you suffer from a rigid censorship. Is that true?”

“Yes,” he replied, “that is one of our great grievances, and a constant source of irritation. The Turks might easily relax their vigilance in this respect, and bring our people into a more amiable attitude towards them. Their severity does them no good, but does us a deal of injury.”

“Tell me what you mean,” I said.

“Well,” he replied, “let me give you some instances. Our hymn-books have been confiscated because the word ‘Armenia’ appears in some of their songs. The Turk hates the word ‘Armenia.’ He says there is no such place. There is an Anatolia, but not an Armenia, and he prohibits any reference to it.”

“But there has been an Armenia,” I broke in, “and history is history. You have had a kingdom, and a past of which you need not be ashamed.

“True,” he answered, “and I am glad to hear your words. But there is no Armenia to-day. We are a conquered people, and the word must be expunged even from our hymn-books. Moreover, to sing a national song is to render one liable to arrest. But that is not all.”

“Well, tell me the rest.”

“In a book of history used in the schools it



is natural that a list of old-time Armenian kings should appear. Can you have a history of this country without mentioning the fact that in former days we were of such importance as a people that the Roman Emperor, Pompey, after a severe struggle, captured an Armenian queen and carried her to the Imperial City to grace his triumphal procession? But if that statement were made in a book used in our schools, all such books would be confiscated. It seems to me to be bad policy, for although we are prohibited from speaking of these facts, they are still facts, and not even the Turk can successfully deny them. The truth is the truth, and that ends the matter. It does not lessen our loyalty to know that centuries ago we were an independent people. We prefer to live in Turkey than to abide in any other country, for we have more freedom here, and if the Turk would be simply fair to us, there would be no trouble. We don't want to emigrate. We have a strong affection for our home, and if allowed even a modicum of liberty, we would be prosperous and happy."

"Then you are not looking forward," I said, "to converting yourselves into a Bulgaria?"

He smiled sadly. "A wild dream of folly,

my friend. You have traversed this country, and can see that such a hope would be the dream of a fool. We do not live in a section by ourselves, we are not accustomed to the use of arms. If you have investigated the subject, you have found here and there Armenian villages, but surrounded on all sides by half-a-dozen Kurdish villages. In the majority of instances, there are in the Kurdish villages, ten, twenty, perhaps thirty Armenian families. What preparation is it possible to make for autonomy? The revolutionists may make their living out of agitation, but we poor creatures are made to suffer for their idiocy. Is that just? Should we be slaughtered wholesale because a few score of fools try to persuade us to do what we have no desire to do, what we have never intended to do? Why not punish these criminals, rather than involve the innocent? I assure you that no one fears the revolutionist as the average Armenian does.

“ Ah,” he continued, “ we were a happy people once. We paid large taxes, we had large business interests, we were contented and prosperous. But the Treaty of Berlin! And the interference of England! If Europe would let us alone, we might still have a future, but as it

is, we seem to be a doomed people. The poor, poor Armenians! Europe has intervened in our favor, and ruined us. She has roused the worst passions of the Turk against us, has excited his suspicions, and left us in the lurch, to die or live as God may will. Alas, my desolate country!"

And so ended the interview.

I ought to add that I showed the letter in which I gave this interview to the readers of the *Herald* to Sirry Bey. I did not care to do anything which was not above-board. He was almost furious, denied every important statement, declared the whole thing calumnious, and begged me not to send it, or if it had been sent, to recall it. We had a long conference on this subject, and a warm one, but I could not see my way clear to suppress the letter and so it was published. My own impression is that the position taken by the Armenians is correct, and that there is no exaggeration in the assertions made.

When I returned to Constantinople I spoke with a gentleman who is intimately acquainted with Turkish affairs.

"Is the censorship really severe?" I asked.

"Very," was his reply.

"Are school-books ever confiscated for the



reasons mentioned in this interview, that is, simply because the word "Armenia" occurs in them?"

"Without doubt," he answered. "It has been done right here in this city, and not long ago."

"You are sure of that fact?"

"Perfectly so."

I give the story as it was given to me. You may accept or reject as you please, but as for myself I believe it to be essentially true.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### A SUMMARY.

“WHAT is that long line of grayish blue on the horizon-line?” I asked Mr. Whitman when we halted on the summit of a hill, as we neared Alexandretta.

He looked, and looked, and was puzzled.

“Is it a stratum of cloud?” I queried, “or,”—and here I hesitated.

He looked again. “It must be the Mediterranean,” he said slowly, as though the statement had an element of danger in it.

“Then our trip is over, and we shall get something to eat, and a bed to sleep in,” I cried.

Yes, it was the sea, and in two hours we were safely ensconced in what is called a hotel by the people of Alexandretta. It was the rudest structure imaginable, but there were real beds in it, and real sheets on the beds, two luxuries which we fully appreciated. Moreover there

was a wash-bowl and a pitcher of water, and the first thing I did was to lock my door and take as much of a bath as the circumstances allowed. Then came a change of underclothing, and Richard was himself again.

The American Consul, Mr. Horace Lee Washington, called on us, and demanded as his right that we should take all our meals with him and his wife during our stay, an invitation which was accepted with astonishing eagerness. What an oasis that American home was! We spent hours there, breathing a new atmosphere and discussing the thousand and one incidents of the journey, and the thousand and one conclusions which we had reached. His good wife saw at a glance that we were hungry and nervously worn out, and proffered us a generous hospitality with a grace I shall not easily forget. Whitman and I were both unkempt, and our clothes were tattered and torn, but she tactfully ignored these facts, and put us so much at our ease that we ignored them ourselves. We dined and lunched at the Consulate and Mrs. Washington pretended not to notice that we were eating her out of house and home. I learned then what I have long suspected, that there are just two things that make a man what he is—an immortal



soul, and a good digestion. During my stay in Alexandretta I am sure I put the digestion first, for during the whole trip my soul had plenty of nourishment, while my body—well, I often thought of the poor Frenchman who said, “He who sleeps dines.” I had so often dined in that way, that is, by pulling my fur coat over me and dreaming, that perhaps I exaggerated the value of good things to eat. At any rate, my gratitude for the courtesy extended cannot express itself in words, and I look back to those festive occasions with a degree of emotion which no one can appreciate who has not passed two months with an appetite which could not be satisfied.

Alexandretta is a city built on a bog. It is full of camels and camel-drivers and malaria. The camels are in thousands, the drivers are in hundreds, and the malaria is abundant. It is a terminus of the route into the interior, and these patient camels are the chief means of transportation. It is, of course, an unhealthy city, for the drainage has been neglected, and the people suffer from all the diseases that a marsh, which is no better than a soaked sponge, can produce. With a little enterprise the place could be made healthy, but as it is, some of the poorer classes who live on the outskirts

build their houses on stilts in order to escape the pestilence which oozes from the mire.

When I started from Constantinople, I declared my intention to interview neither Turks nor Armenians, for the first were still under the influence of that frenzied panic without which it is impossible to account for the massacres; and the second, being the victims of disaster, would naturally exaggerate the events which occurred. I very soon found, however, that this was a mistaken policy, and therefore abandoned it. I saw all classes, and questioned men of all nationalities. I talked with the valis, or governors of provinces, with Turkish military officers, with colonels of Hamidieh regiments, with missionaries, with consuls, American, French, English and Russian, with Armenian bishops and Armenian peasants, and in a word with everyone who came in my way who was willing to discuss the subject. My opportunities were many and various, and I tried to make use of them all. True, I lived with these Anatolians only two months; but if one has his eyes and ears open for even two months, he is likely to see and hear a good deal.

In this last chapter, I want to say once more that our route was laid out by Mr. Whit-

man and myself, and that we had the most perfect freedom accorded us. Our escort did not know where we went, or whom we saw during our stay at any given station. Moreover, they exhibited no curiosity on the subject, being anxious only to furnish us with any means of getting at the truth. Some of my letters were very distasteful to them—I ought to say that much—and they very naturally objected to many of my statements, but the matter ended when they expressed the opinion that my assertions were beyond the reach of their approval. I was very candid in telling them what I thought of the situation, and they were equally candid in declaring against my conclusions, but I changed neither fact nor conviction in consequence of this difference, which ought to be sufficient proof that the liberty I claimed was exercised without let or hindrance through the entire journey.

What a comfort it was to feel that our physical privations and hardships were all behind us! There was Zigana Pass, where we went up into the clouds, not a green spot within our wide horizon-line, but one endless covering of snow on a landscape inexpressibly magnificent. Then came Kop Dagh, its summit towering eight thousand feet above sea-level, with a



cloudless sky above it, so blue, that we seemed to have passed through the gates of the New Jerusalem, and to have become residents of the heavenly kingdom. Then later on came the pass of Chaslak, and after that the Takir Pass. We had magnificent weather, however, and though we were nearly frozen, and had only a stable for our lodging-room, we had many good reasons for mutual congratulation. When we reached the coast the journey was like a dream, a marvellous dream, with just a touch of the nightmare in it.

Now to summarize. When I say that the Armenian massacres were caused by Armenian revolutionists, I tell a truth, and a very important truth, but it is not the whole truth. It would be more correct to say that the presence of the revolutionists gave occasion and excuse for the massacres. That the Turks were looking for an occasion and an excuse, no one can doubt who has traversed that country.

Way down in the bottom of his heart, the Turk hates the Armenian. He will swear to the contrary, but I am convinced that the statement is true nevertheless. The reasons for this are abundant, as I have tried to show in other chapters of this book. The Turk is

extremely jealous of the Armenian, jealous of his mental superiority, of his thrift and business enterprise. He has, therefore, resorted to oppression, and his steady purpose has been and is now, to keep his victims poor. Equal opportunities for all are a delusion and a snare. They do not exist, and it is not intended that they shall exist. I know that such an assertion is not palatable, and will be received with a shrug of the shoulders by many, but that is my conviction, and I am forced to declare it. The Turk will do all he can to drive Armenians out of the country, and though there is, at the present moment, a lull in the storm, the storm is not over by any means. The hand of Turkey has been restrained for reasons of expediency, but it is the same hand, and it has not lost its cunning. If the Turk could have his own way, unhampered by the public opinion of Europe, there would neither be an Armenian nor a missionary in Anatolia at the end of twenty years, for both are equally obnoxious.

I do not believe that the end of the trouble has been reached. Sharp eyes are even now on the lookout for some incident which can be made the basis of a renewed attack, and when that incident occurs the horrors of the past will be repeated. Tranquillity reigns at present?

I do not think so. In the Kurdish region no Armenian can travel without a guard. He is not allowed to protect himself, which he could easily do if he were permitted to bear arms, and no one is interested in protecting him ; not the law certainly, and not the courts, and least of all the Kurds, who look on him as their natural prey. When the lapse of time brings inevitable forgetfulness of past horrors, when the Powers have too much business on hand to give attention to Turkish affairs, the sword will once again be unsheathed. I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but when an avalanche has started, and is stopped half-way by some obstacle, it is logical to declare that the avalanche will continue its destructive journey whenever the obstacle is removed. The desire to destroy remains in the avalanche all the time, and our only hope, therefore, rests on the obstacle.

In the meantime, the revolutionists are doing what they can to make fresh outrages possible. That is their avowed purpose. They reason that if they can induce the Turks to kill more of the Armenians, themselves excepted, Europe will be forced to intervene, and then the Armenian kingdom will re-establish itself. These short-sighted rogues, who mis-



call themselves patriots, are encouraged by both England and Russia. England has eulogized them, has incited them to new effort. They steal their way into a village under cover of night, stir up those who will listen, declaring that if the people engage in open revolt the Powers will rush to their assistance. England may justly be held responsible for a great deal that has taken place, for she tells the Armenian to strike and then deserts him when he has followed her advice.

As for Russia, she cares neither a jot nor a tittle for the Armenians. All she seeks is additional territory. She has already encroached on Asia Minor, and is slowly working her way towards the Mediterranean. She laughs in her sleeve at the massacres, and is doing what she can secretly to encourage the revolutionists; and as a consequence there is another outbreak. Then she will pose in a maternal attitude, express a vast deal of sympathy, declare that this awful persecution of an inoffensive people must cease, and assume a protectorate over Armenia, which simply means perpetual occupation. She can guard her frontier with sedulous care when she wishes to do so, but when a revolutionist with a box of guns passes her border, she closes her eyes and lets him go.

It is her policy to see everything except what she does not want to see.

I confess to a degree of solicitude about Van. It occupies a very dangerous position. On the other side of the Persian border, which is only a few hours away, a multitude of very troublesome mischief-makers, professional agitators, whose livelihood depends on an occasional uprising, or threatened uprising, are constantly at work. They cross the frontier, preach revolt, and then scurry back to a place of safety. The Van vilayet is the most difficult province in Asia Minor to govern, for it is on a volcano. At any moment a conflict between the restless Armenians and the civil or military authorities may take place, and when it does, it will be like a lighted match thrown on a hay-stack.

Turkey cannot treat crime as a European nation would treat it, because her inherited methods are all Asiatic, and she is in no mood to change them. She does n't kill the criminal, but she kills someone else. If she had a respectable and honest police force, she would hang or imprison the guilty parties ; but instead of that she lets loose her hordes—the mob consisting of both soldiers and citizens—tells them to begin at the sound of the trumpet and

keep killing until the trumpet sounds a second time. Europe may protest as much and as loudly as she pleases, but her protests are a waste of breath.

It is true that the Armenians ought to see that they are so scattered, so few in number, and so helpless, so far as the importation of arms is concerned, that a successful revolt would be utterly out of the question. Most of them do see this, and they deprecate the action of the revolutionists. It is equally true that the Turks ought to see that for these same reasons the Armenians are not to be feared. If the Armenians can be accused of stupidity for dreaming of the impossible, the Turks are also stupid for murdering thousands of people, and then claiming that they have put down a rebellion which in reality never existed.

As to the present condition of these unfortunate folk, it is of the most desperate character. Look at a few facts, and you will see that it cannot be otherwise than hopeless. There were in Armenia half a million souls, more or less. The number may possibly reach as high as six hundred thousand. Now, it would be a moderate estimate to say that fifty thousand have been killed. These victims were mostly



men, heads of families. Very few women were murdered—rumors to the contrary notwithstanding—and very few children. There were instances in which both women and children suffered, but they were very rare exceptions. If orders were given to butcher the people, those orders specially excepted women and children. I cannot prove this, of course, for the evidence will never reach the eyes of the world, but I have made the most careful inquiries, and I believe the statement to be true.

These fifty thousand able-bodied men, the producers of the community, make a tremendous gap in the aggregate of half a million. If you further subtract from the grand total the number of women in the households, and the boys and girls, and the old and decrepit, you have n't many thousands left to carry on the enterprises of the country. And when, still further, you remember that a larger number than can be reckoned were driven from their homes to die of cold and starvation, as well as disease, you can understand that a mere working remnant of this once prosperous people remains, and that even this remnant is thoroughly disheartened if not impoverished. The only ray of hope comes from the fact that the Armenian is an optimist. He has great

recuperative power, much more than the pure Turk or even the Kurd has. He is also a reproductive creature, and will have a family much larger than that of any Turk in the neighborhood. Give him twenty years of peace, and even a decent opportunity and he will recover from the stunning blow he has received. But who can guarantee the twenty years?

There is another fact with regard to the present condition of Turkey which has been forced upon me at every turn, namely: that a country which never builds roads has no commercial future, and will suffer in the sharp competition for the world's trade. I can speak on this subject with a good deal of authority, and without the fear of contradiction, because I speak from personal experience. We travelled from the Black Sea at Trebizond to the sea-coast on the south. I reckon that the journey in miles will sum up very close to nine hundred. This journey was made in carriages and sledges during its first third, and for the last five hundred miles we took to the saddle, riding steadily from sunrise to sunset, with a short respite for breakfast at eleven. I think, therefore, that my opinion in the matter of roads may be regarded as a fairly good one.

I make the bold assertion that there are no roads in Eastern Asia Minor which in our country would be looked upon with anything short of disgust. There is on the extreme north one road which apologizes for itself every time a carriage attempts to pass over it, and the traveller is either very lucky or very lazy who does not walk a good part of the way. In nearly all the rest of the country there is nothing better than a bridle-path, not made by the government, but by the caravans. As all the spare stones in the universe seem to have found their way there, you can easily imagine the difficulties one meets with. The camel can go at the rate of three miles an hour, or very little more, and the man on horseback can make only four miles. Trotting is utterly out of the question ; galloping would be considered an attempt at suicide, and therefore a horse that can walk fast is a desirable animal to possess. I am strictly within the limits of the truth when I say that there are scores on scores of miles of road so rocky that unless your beast is sure-footed you are liable to break your neck. As my horse picked his way, grunting ever and anon when he came to a specially dangerous spot, I more than once wondered how it would be possible to get to the next station. None



of my readers can possibly conceive of the condition of affairs. You see dead horses all along the route, with a flock of vultures hovering near, scared at your approach. These poor creatures have broken their legs, or have given out through sheer fatigue, and have been left to birds of prey and the fierce dogs which are to be found everywhere.

Now Asia Minor is not only one of the most beautiful areas of the globe's surface, but its soil is rich, wonderfully rich, and its mountains abound in various ores. With a good railroad, which would make it possible to reach a profitable market, the people would be transformed in a single generation. There is plenty of mineral wealth, but no capital and no enterprise. The farmer plows his land with a sharpened iron-shod stick, gets a crop which supplies his own narrow wants and those of the villagers, is content to live in a mud-house, with his cattle under the same roof, and to dress in variegated rags. He has no ambition, but lives and dies in filth.

Over these bridle-paths great caravans of camels find their way to Trebizond from far off Bagdad laden with goods for Constantinople. With good roads, or even half-decent ones, the cost of transportation would be dimin-

ished and the profits of trade increased. But Turkey is sluggish, paralyzed, hopeless. It is not only the Armenian who has no future, but the Turk also. The Armenian has shown his ability to conquer circumstances, but the Anatolian Turk seems to have succumbed to them. He is almost pre-historic in his methods and in his mode of life. A dozen wealthy Yankees, such as I could name, would make Anatolia feel that it had been born again, had enjoyed the delights of reincarnation. But what can be hoped for a country, if when a bridge breaks down, it never enters an official's head that it can be mended, and it is left for years in its ruined condition, while travellers are forced to ford the stream which runs under it? The country is full of ruins which date back to the time of Alexander the Great, but among them all, poor Anatolia is itself the most complete and the saddest. It is thriftless and unprosperous, like a man in his decrepitude, and one could not prophesy anything like a brilliant future for it without laying himself open to the charge of dense prejudice or fathomless ignorance. I like the Turk in many respects, but that is no reason why I should shut my eyes to plain facts.

Moreover, it is clear to me that Turkey will

never organize practical reforms. Not all the powers of Europe can force them on her. She does n't know how to reform, is quite content to remain as she is, hates all innovations, even when they come in the shape of improvements.

There is another fact which I am prompted to mention. Somebody brought me, during our stay in Diarbekir, quite a number of photographs of bits of architecture.

"They are exquisite," I said, as I looked at them with a rather critical eye. "That fret-work was designed by a man of genius, and that courtyard, with a fountain in the centre, is quaint, unique, and——"

"And very interesting, is it not?" broke in my friend.

"Yes, more than interesting," I replied. "It is evidence of a civilization in which art occupies a prominent place. It is thoroughly Oriental, too."

He smiled.

"Where did you get these pictures," I asked. "There is a Moorish touch to them. Have you lived in the far East?"

"They were taken right here in Diarbekir, and I can show you the originals whenever you have leisure."



“In this old-fashioned, decayed city?” I said in surprise. “Impossible!”

“Apparently impossible,” he answered, “but really true. The city is full of bits like that. No one regards them as of any importance, and very few know of their existence; but I have a fancy for such things, and can give you a pleasant hour whenever you have leisure.”

The present civilization of Anatolia is built on a previous civilization far better than itself. The people who live there now are satisfied with a lower order of things than their predecessors. You have this fact forced upon you at every step. The Turk of to-day has no love of art. His life is the dreariest monotony that can be conceived. Give him a shelter, no matter how poor it may be, and something to eat, little matter what, and he is satisfied. There is no divine afflatus in his soul. He is not simply unprogressive, but stupidly dull, either ignorant of the strides which the rest of the world is making, or sullenly indifferent to them.

Explorers of the far East have dug up a city from under another city on the same site. The new city is semi-barbaric; the old city was worth living in. There has been a decadence in the mode of living, in the habits and customs

of those who went before. This fact is illustrated in every part of Asia Minor. There are traces of great things, but they belong to the past, and in the comparison that which is modern is worthless. When you can truthfully say of a nation that it was semi-barbaric five centuries ago, and that it has remained ever since in the same moral, political, and religious condition, it is rather difficult to become enthusiastic over its future. And when you can say truthfully that the people who have been ousted to make room for the victors enjoyed a higher civilization than the newcomers, and that during these many generations they have neither adopted the superior ideas of the conquered, nor created any of their own, you are not rash if you declare that their case is hopeless. All this may be said of Turkey without fear of contradiction. Nothing is more clear than that it does not belong to the family of really civilized nations, and that its present position is an anomaly. Its manifest destiny is to retire to the East, not because it is incapable of progress, but because it regards progress as political heresy. It is still a nation of nomads, and the proximity of other nations has produced no change whatever. It is what it was, and it will be what it is.

Exactly what the degenerating influence is, wiser heads than mine must determine. But this influence pervades the whole country, and all classes. The Kurds were once a strong people with their castles and their fortresses. They were warlike, and they had a crude civilization. Under the proper tutelage they might recover their lost prestige, but as it is, they live the lives of barbarians, are without thrift or enterprise, have no ambition, not one of the elements of national strength, not even patriotism. They have fallen to the lowest level, and there they will remain until some mighty leader shall develop the latent qualities of character which have so long been invisible. Will that leader ever appear?

If you tell me it is the Koran which has produced this havoc, you remind me of a prejudice to the same effect which I myself once entertained. It is so easy to solve the problem in that way, and so difficult to solve it in any other way. But I confess to grave doubts. There must be something stronger than religion at work to debase them. The Armenians are Christians, and if Christianity can civilize men in spite of all adverse influences, why are not they brilliant examples of superiority? The fact is, they are as low in many respects



as either Turks or Kurds. Their houses are no better made, and no more cleanly. They, too, are content to live in indescribable filth, and though they are said to be a moral people, you cannot tell an Armenian from a Kurdish village by anything that meets the eye of the traveller. There is a monotone throughout Turkey, and it is in the minor key everywhere. The Koran has not depressed the Turk, neither has Christianity elevated the Armenian, as you would expect it to do.

I cannot name the root of the difficulty, but I feel sure that it is political rather than religious, and that not all the Powers of Europe can make Turkey other than it is, a moribund nation with a fatal disease for which there is no known remedy.

I am aware that these statements may seem harsh, but they are not meant to be. I know also that though I have studied the matter for many years in the privacy of my library, I have only spent two months in Anatolia, and must therefore make my assertions with hesitation. If my readers think I have overstated the inability of the Turk, and prophesy that he will be better in the twentieth century than he is now, I shall make no demur, but rather rejoice. But since I was sent to that country to use my

eyes, my ears, and my brains, my sole duty is to tell them the truth as I understand it, and that I have tried to do, giving both sides with equal impartiality. Some of my friends will be disappointed that I have not cursed the Turk unreservedly and praised the Armenian without stint, but with that I have nothing to do. It is not my business to either please or offend, but to give my opinions frankly for what they are worth.

THE END.













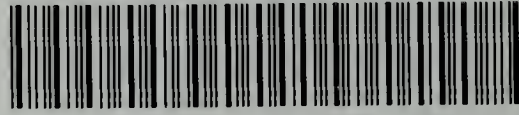




DS165 .H52

Through Armenia on horseback / by Geo.

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00135 0083